

Wednesday April 24 1996

Abu Dhabi D 8.50	Hong Kong HK 2.25	Osaka CR 1.00
Algeria L 2.20	Indonesia I 2.00	Prague PR 1.70
Australia AU 1.50	Japan J 1.50	Reykjavik R 1.50
Austria AS 1.50	Korea S 1.50	Rome IT 1.50
Bahamas B 1.50	Malaysia M 1.50	Singapore S 1.50
Bahrain B 1.50	Netherlands N 1.50	Stockholm S 1.50
Bangkok B 1.50	New Zealand NZ 1.50	Taipei T 1.50
Belgium B 1.50	Philippines P 1.50	Tokyo T 1.50
Berlin B 1.50	Saudi Arabia SA 1.50	Ulaanbaatar U 1.50
Bombay B 1.50	South Africa SA 1.50	Washington DC W 1.50
Buenos Aires B 1.50	Spain S 1.50	Zurich Z 1.50
Calcutta C 1.50	Sweden S 1.50	
Cairo C 1.50	Switzerland S 1.50	
Canton C 1.50	Taiwan T 1.50	
Cebu C 1.50	Thailand T 1.50	
Chengde C 1.50	Turkey T 1.50	
Chongqing C 1.50	USA US 1.50	
Cincinnati C 1.50	West Bank W 1.50	
Columbo C 1.50	Yemen Y 1.50	
Dhaka D 1.50	Yokohama Y 1.50	
Dublin D 1.50		
Frankfurt F 1.50		
Geneva G 1.50		
Hankow H 1.50		
Hong Kong HK 2.25		
London L 1.50		
Lyons L 1.50		
Manila M 1.50		
Medan M 1.50		
Mumbai B 1.50		
Nairobi N 1.50		
Osaka CR 1.00		
Paris P 1.50		
Perth P 1.50		
Port of Spain P 1.50		
Rangoon R 1.50		
Riyadh R 1.50		
Singapore S 1.50		
Sydney S 1.50		
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Tokyo T 1.50		
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Zurich Z 1.50		

The Guardian

INTERNATIONAL

3

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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 46,535

How supermarkets control what we buy

Who's your favourite supermarket?

G2 with 10/11

Catherine Bennett on the woman behind the mask

The Queen of heart surgery

G2 with 10/11

Society

Why Americans love nuclear power

G2 with 10/11

Brussels angered by lack of clear BSE action plan

EU snubs Hogg on beef ban

Stephen Bates in Brussels and Michael White

DOUGLAS Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, returned empty-handed from his latest talks with the European Commission in Brussels yesterday, with no promise of an early end to the European Union's beef ban despite days of Conservative bluster and hints of a trade war.

During fevered exchanges in the Commons John Major ruled out illegal retaliation, while refusing to identify the other options ministers might deploy if all else fails. It prompted Tony Blair, the Labour leader, to dub his indecisive stance on the crisis as a "Grand Old Duke of York strategy", while Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, called it "five weeks of fiasco".



Diary of a Climbdown

MONDAY, APRIL 22
Gumbo diplomacy: Malcolm Rifkind refuses to rule out import bans. "No country, not just the UK, could accept an indefinite, comprehensive ban that is not required for health reasons."

TUESDAY, APRIL 23
Rifkind reconsidered: "I don't see the United Kingdom, which is one of the most law-abiding countries in the world, contemplating breaking the law."

ing together to try to bring about a solution to this problem.

Notably more restrained beside him, Mr Fischer made it clear that the ban would not be lifted until further measures had been adopted. He said: "Those controls have to convince us that the prerequisites are there for removing the export ban. The quicker this can take place the better."

Brussels officials made little secret of their annoyance that Mr Hogg had produced no additional proposals to prove British seriousness about eradicating BSE, three weeks after he was asked to do so at the last agriculture ministers' meeting.

In two hours of frosty talks with Franz Fischler, the Agriculture Commissioner, Mr Hogg was warned that the Government will have to produce more detailed measures at a meeting of EU agriculture ministers in Luxembourg on Monday before lifting the ban could be considered.

The ban is unlikely to be removed for several weeks, if not months, even if British proposals are agreed on Monday. That is by no means certain because the commission has made it clear they will have to be in place and working before there can be any recommendation of a return to normal.

The impasse is bound to heighten the dangers for Mr Major's leadership as right-wing Tory critics step up the pressure for unilateral action, though key players like John Redwood reject talk of illegality such as withholding budget payments.

In a diversionary ploy, the Prime Minister will use a speech to the Institute of Directors today to talk tough against backdoor EU encroachments against Britain's social chapter opt-out. He will warn that "subsequent shifts in the provisions" of EU law could make it impossible for him to agree to new laws.

Following Monday's upheavals in London and Luxembourg in which ministers appeared first to encourage, then to dampen speculation that Mr Major might initiate retaliatory bans on European agricultural exports to Britain, Mr Hogg admitted that he had made no threats at yesterday's meeting.

He told journalists: "There was no discussion of retaliation. We were talking about how together we can satisfy

the Council of Ministers, the veterinary committee and the commission as to the fullness of the steps we have taken and as to our earnest desire to see a substantial reduction in the incidence of BSE.

"It is our belief that British beef is safe and we were work-

ing together to try to bring about a solution to this problem.

Mr Fischer made clear to MEPs on Monday that the slaughtering of some younger cattle in herds where there have been cases of BSE will have to be accepted and implemented before the ban can be lifted. The measures will also be monitored for an unspecified period to check that they are working.

Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, insisted yesterday that there was no question of Britain acting illegally to force the lifting of the ban. Michael Heseltine, the deputy prime minister, reinforced the message by saying on BBC radio: "It would have been naive and irresponsible for us to have started issuing threats to senior European colleagues."

Although the commission hinted at eventually lifting the ban for grass-reared cattle — if the Government can meet from particular organically-reared herds is not infected — and on some supplementary products, there was little sign from Britain that extra measures are being formulated.

Strong suggestions that the Government might put forward proposals to cull an additional 40,000 cattle from herds where there have been cases of BSE, no figures were discussed yesterday.

Germany has already made clear that it will not accept any British beef until it has received proof that the disease is eradicated — something that will take years to achieve.



Cameron award for O'Kane

GUARDIAN journalist Maggie O'Kane last night received the 1996 James Cameron Award for international and domestic reporting "of the highest quality".

These included her work marking the fifth anniversary of the Gulf war and her investigation into the lives of child prostitutes in Bradford.

O'Kane, described in the citation as a "fearless" journalist, was named "unhindered by fear," has twice been named "journalist of the year."



Richard Branson sweeping Liza Minelli off her feet at Virgin Megastore's launch in New York

Virgin chief in sex lawsuit

Alex Bellor

RICHARD BRANSON, the head of Virgin and self-styled boy's own hero, is being sued for sexual harassment by a former senior manager who claims he fondled her breasts.

Mr Branson, who was in New York yesterday to open a Virgin Megastore, immediately dismissed the allegations as a cheap publicity stunt to spoil the launch. He said: "The allegations are not true. They have no legal or factual basis. We will be going to court to get it struck out and are confident we will succeed. Anyone in business in the US nowadays has to accept this sort of thing."

The lawsuit was filed in a New York federal court by Elizabeth Hinko, who was appointed as Virgin Atlantic's Manhattan public relations manager in 1992. She accuses Mr Branson of sexual harassment and subsequent discrimination that led to her dismissal last year.

Ms Hinko claims that in May 1994, at a media party at Mr Branson's London estate, he made unwelcome sexual advances by fondling and grabbing her breasts in front of other employees and guests. She claims that her problems had started that year when David Tait, a Virgin executive vice-president whom she is also suing began harassing her and publicly ridiculing her.

Ms Hinko is seeking unspecified compensatory and punitive damages, back pay and reinstatement. Should the airline fail to reimburse her, she is asking the court to order it to pay her future wages, pension bonuses and other lost benefits.

Mr Branson said that his family and 70 members of the press were at the party and added: "It is worth noting that the alleged incident supposedly took place two years ago and this is the first I have heard about it."

Chernobyl fire kindles fears of radioactivity

JUST A SMALL ONE.

David Hearst in Moscow

STRONG winds were blowing black pillars of radioactive smoke towards Kiev last night after fire swept through five derelict and highly contaminated villages in Ukraine's exclusion zone around the Chernobyl nuclear power station.

The blaze came three days before the 10th anniversary of the world's worst nuclear accident, and started when a cigarette butt was dropped in tinder-dry conditions.



Last night, there were conflicting views about the danger of radioactive smoke. Some radiologists feared the fire would carry radioactive material out of the 19-mile exclusion zone. Vadim Gribchenko, deputy head of Ukraine's environment ministry's nuclear-safety department, said: "If the fire is allowed to burn much longer, it will certainly carry some radionuclides beyond the exclusion zone and threaten the outside population."

Firemen, however, played down the danger of radioactivity. Vassily Melnik, head

of the Kiev fire department, said forest fires were common and radioactivity at the site was not increasing. But after two explosions at Chernobyl's number four reactor 10 years ago, there are concentrations of high radioactivity all round the reactor site.

Ukraine's official news media also played down the danger of nuclear-dust particles spreading into the atmosphere.

But Anthony Froggatt, a spokesman for Greenpeace in Kiev, said: "Fires are one of the major ways that radionuclides travel to uncontaminated regions. This is clearly a danger to the health of people, and not only in Ukraine. About 800 people have moved back permanently into the zone in defiance of government exclusion orders."

Last weekend, at the nuclear summit in Moscow, Leonid Kuchma, Ukraine's president, told a meeting of the G7 leaders of his decision to close one of two remaining working reactors at Chernobyl. A study by western-European scientists is due to be completed by the end of the year on the dangerously cracked state of the concrete sarcophagus encasing the reactor core, which is still burning inside.

Inside

Britain

World News

City

Sport

Comment and Letters 8

Obituaries 10

G2 Francis Wheen 5; Arts 8/9; Radio 16; TV 16



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Sketch

Tens of laughs as play on words fails to add up

Simon Hoggart

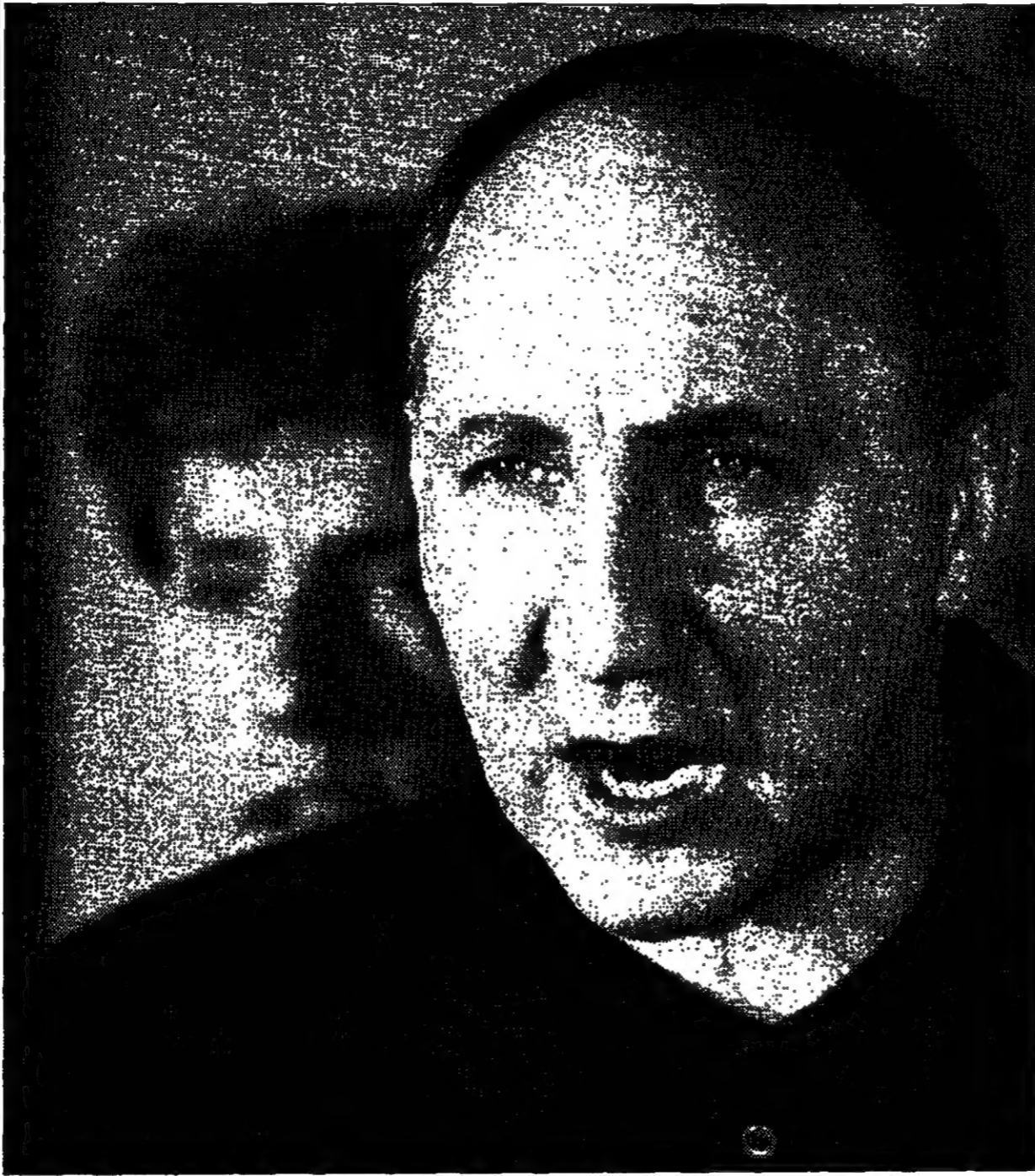
MPs often debate who won "Prime Minister's Questions," though like the old Soviet Union ice skating judges, they tend to make sure the right side gets the points. Yesterday I thought Tony Blair was the clear winner. For one reason, he was obviously listening to what Mr Major was saying and responding to it; a riposte sounds much sharper when it clearly hasn't been scripted in advance. Then Mr Major himself was also under pressure. You can tell he's rattled when he produces a stack of Majorisms. Majorisms aren't meaningless blether, like George Bush's Bushisms, or simply bonkers, like Ronald Reagan's Reaganisms. Instead they are peculiar, wily and fey — perfectly grammatical, but in a deeper, more profound way, quite meaningless. For instance, Hilary Armstrong (Lab, Durham NW) quoted Sir James Goldsmith, who had asked about the Prime Minister: "How can people be expected to follow a man who zig-zags so much?" Mr Major replied: "I can think of some prominent politicians who have made it their life's work in the last two years to deny everything they previously stood for." This was a reference to Tony Blair. But how can you have a life's work which has lasted only two years? He did not explain. Instead he went on: "You might look at some of the pamphlets produced, in which many tens of Labour members show their sharp differences with the Labour Party's front bench policies!" "Many tens?" Labour MPs were delighted, and rolled the cloth-eared phrase around their mouths with noisy pleasure. Jacques Arnold (C, Gravesend) rose to demand that, if the Europeans don't allow our beef back in, we should withdraw both our co-operation and our money. With his voice like the rattle of a dead man's

bones, I have always suspected that Mr Arnold is dug up each morning by the whips, and brought to the Commons in a hearse. Now he has taken up the cause of the cows. I have a terrible fear that the whips might make a mistake, stun him humanely, and have him incinerated. This would be a tragedy for Mr Arnold and his family, but it would keep him out of the food chain. The Prime Minister replied that this course of action would be against the law, and Mr Arnold wouldn't want him to break the law, would he? Mr Blair picked up the subject. He suspected, he said, that "many tens" of Tories privately agreed with Mr Arnold. Not a dazzling joke, perhaps, but at least it showed he was listening. Mr Major said that if the Europeans did not lift the ban, "we will look at other options", to a mock cheer and cries of "Who-o-ah!" from the Labour benches. Mr Blair referred to reports that Mr Major had called other European leaders "bastards". This has the ring of truth; he seems to call most people bastards at one time or another. The Labour leader handled it well. "He calls the other heads of government or... a longish pause, "a bunch of somethings or other!" At the end of the session, Don Anderson asked him what new "measures of appeasement" he was planning to please Sir James Goldsmith. Mr Major replied: "The answer is very clear. None." Now that's not a Majorism, but it may well be a fib. Later there was a debate on the new Northern Ireland electricity, and Peter Robinson (DUP, Belfast E) pointed out that under the strange rules, which allow representation for at least 10 political parties, the new negotiating body could easily have three members of the Natural Law Party. Gerry Fiers (Lab, Belfast) asked Gerry Adams (IRA) how he always known how to levitate buildings, but has generally preferred to use Semtex. Still, it's worth a try; everything else has failed.



Open-air masses... Hundreds of thousands of rock fans crowded into Hyde Park at the Stones In The Park concert in May 1969

PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID NEWELL SMITH



Pete Townshend: 'Quadrophenia's spiritual epiphany transcends the generations'

PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILLITOE

Rock dinosaurs will recall a distant epoch with mammoth Hyde Park gig

Alex Bellis

HYDE PARK will be transformed into Jurassic Park this summer as rock dinosaurs stage what they hope will be the genre's largest concert for 20 years. The Who will perform their rock opera, Quadrophenia, and Bob Dylan, Eric Clapton, and — with a cursory nod to the present day — the Canadian singer Alanis Morissette, are to play before an expected audience of up to 150,000. Launching the event yesterday, the Who's guitarist, Pete Townshend, who is now aged 50 and wrote Quadrophenia 23 years ago, said he wanted to put it on because of the message it gave to teenagers today. "It is very relevant," he said. "It is about a young man who manages to get through those really difficult teenage years. Isn't that what pop music's always about?" Looking like a preacher in a smart black suit, the balding mod said the plot's "spiritual epiphany" transcended the generations. When he first toured with Quadrophenia it "did clunk a bit", he said, but technology now meant it could be staged as a spectacle complete with video images, subtitles, and high-tech scenery. Roger Daltrey, the Who's singer, aged 52, will take the lead role and the group's bass-

ist, John Entwistle, aged 51, will play with an ensemble of 20 musicians. Zak Starkey, who, as the son of Ringo Starr, has perfect dinosaur credentials, will drum for the Who. He was given his first drumkit by the Who's original drummer, Keith Moon, now dead. The MasterCard Masters of Music Concert on June 29 will be the first rock concert in Hyde Park since 1976. However, the royal park is used to hosting large events both for the elderly and involving opera, having put on the V2 Day celebrations last year and Pavarotti in the Park in 1991. Daltrey, who for a time featured his trout farm in American Express credit card commercials, admitted he was nervous about the concert. "It's a bit like looking forward to going to the dentist. It's good once you've done it," he said. The concert is timed to coincide with the eve of the final in Britain of the Euro '96 football championships, and is the main event of this year's National Music Festival. It is also the biggest one-day music event since Blackbushe in Berkshire in 1978 with Bob Dylan and Eric Clapton, according to the organiser, Harvey Goldsmith. Tom Shebbeare, director of the Prince's Trust, said the concert was expected to raise £200,000 for the charity. Tickets go on sale at £8 on Friday.

First night

Reason vs hate, fear and racism

Michael Billington

Twelve Angry Men

Comedy Theatre

REGINALD ROSE'S Twelve Angry Men hails from the golden age of American television, was famously filmed by Sidney Lumet in 1957 and even parodied by Tony Hancock. But, as Harold Pinter's new production shows, it still has plenty of dramatic juice in it, partly because it offers the fascinating spectacle of people changing their mind under pressure of reason and partly because it exposes some of the issues surrounding the judicial system. Twelve New York jurors, on a sultry afternoon, are confronted by what looks like an open-and-shut case of first-degree murder. A 19-year-old boy has apparently killed his father. The case rests on the recovery of the switch-knife and the testimony of an old man who heard the boy threaten murder and a woman opposite who saw the killing take place through the windows of a passing train. But one juror expresses "reasonable doubt" gradually, through patient sifting of the evidence, swings his colleagues round. In one sense, the play is a product of its time: an all-white, all-male jury is asked to pronounce on what, by implication, is a black community killing. There is also an obvious dramatic weakness: the case on examination turns out to be so full of holes that it is hard to believe that even a reluctantly appointed defence counsel wouldn't, out of sheer

professional pride, have torn it to shreds. But the power of Rose's play lies in its exposure of the jury system. On one level, it shows how efficiently it can sense prevail. But it also demonstrates, ruthlessly and un sentimentally, how people bring their weaknesses, paranoia and neurosis with them into the jury-room. One guy wants a quick verdict so he can get to a ball-game; another is revealed as a demagogic racist; a third sees the killing as an assault on patriarchal values. Far from being a hymn to the notion of "twelve good men and true," the play shows a disturbing cross-section of society. Pinter's production not only manages to keep the action fluid; it also points up the mania and muddle of the average jury. Kevin Whately bats effectively for ill-rational doubt, and Timothy West is scrupulously good as a broker finally swayed by logic. But the characters you remember are those filled by rage against a rapidly changing world: in particular, Tony Haygarth as a blistering redneck who finds in the case an echo of his own parental fears, and Peter Vaughan as a slick bigot who sees all ethnic minorities as "wild animals". I'd always thought of Twelve Angry Men as a paean to justice. This production brings out the play's devastating indictment of the racial and social panic at the heart of 1950s America. You could even say it puts the O. J. Simpson verdict in its historical context in that it reminds us of an era when to be black was to be automatically guilty. This review appeared in later editions yesterday

Beef exporters hand out steaks in cash protest

Paul Brown

Environment Correspondent

BEF exporters are to sue the Ministry of Agriculture after being left with £35 million worth of stock impounded in warehouses or on the high seas in the wake of the BSE crisis. The beef was approved for human consumption before the Euro-

pean ban and condemned on its way to customers. It falls outside the Government's existing compensation payments system and some meat exporters face bankruptcy. Yesterday the International Meat Traders Association gave away £10,000 worth of Scottish beef in London to draw attention to their plight. Leader comment, page 8

Brown attacks tax plans 'lies'

Patrick Wintour, Chief Political Correspondent

GORDON BROWN, the shadow chancellor, accused accountants and the tax avoidance industry yesterday of peddling lies about Labour's tax plans, taking money on false pretences, and selling dossiers to clients based on idle gossip and unformed rumour. Mr Brown's attempt to expose bogus expert advice on Labour's tax plans provoked calls from the accountancy profession for him to rectify any of its errors by publishing his party's plans. One accountancy firm, Ernst & Young, admitted its advice was based on educated guesses. The shadow chancellor's attack came at a Labour-sponsored conference marking the end of Tony Blair's eight month round of industry forum consultations. The forum heard strong calls from industrialists, including Ian Gibson, chief executive of Nissan, for governments to do more to invest in human capital and to improve the financing of small and medium sized firms. Mr Brown told the conference: "In the past few weeks we have seen dossiers of idle gossip, uninformed rumour, inaccurate information and Conservative lies about Labour and they have all been made with no access to Labour's budget thinking. "People would be better gambling on the national lottery than on random advice coming from some of these sources. If in any other occupation peddling rumours and lies were the basis of advice, the authors would be sacked." Accusing the tax avoidance industry of selling Britain short, he said he had written to one firm pointing out 12 factual errors in a short document prepared for nationwide seminars on tax avoidance, including offshore trusts. His remarks came soon after it was revealed that the accountancy firm, KPMG, was organising 150 seminars around the world. Mr Brown made a virtue of his refusal to publish Labour's tax plans, saying it would be simple to publish them now. However, he insisted that Labour wanted to publish proposals only in the light of economic circumstances, adding that the Chan-

Advice

IN ITS Pre-Election Tax Planning document KPMG advises clients:
 □ Use offshore trusts for their tax benefits.
 □ Use full allowance for Peps and Pessas, in case Labour withdraws these.
 □ Place short-term taxable assets in trust for dependents.
 □ Take early retirement before the election in case the Capital Gains Tax rules are amended to encourage longer-term holdings.
 Gordon Brown said the claims that people who earn more than £40,000 will have less disposable income were "supposition converted into prediction". The accountants Smith & Williamson have published a guide entitled Financial Advice for a Change of Government. Like KPMG, it warns of a 50 per cent tax for the "super rich" who earn more than £80,000. It advises its wealthy clients to accelerate the receipt of income before the General Election. Ernest & Young said: "Some degree of educated guessing is inevitable and we haven't disguised that. We would be delighted to comment on a fully fledged tax policy document from Labour." Brian Mawhinney, the Conservative Party chairman, said: "If Mr Brown doesn't like it he has a simple remedy, he should publish the tax plans and be damned." Notebook, page 11

cellor, Kenneth Clarke, had not been criticised last week for saying he would not begin to think about the Government's tax plans until weeks before the November budget. He also laid down the law to his own party after a month of speculation, which included Labour MPs calling for Labour to commit itself to a new higher rate of tax. "I will make the decisions on tax. I know the condition of the economy, and I will make them according to the principles which show Labour is interested in a fair deal for every taxpayer, and not penal taxation." Peter Hobbs, head of the tax faculty at the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, described Mr Brown's attack as "a number of extreme statements, which would not be generally accepted in the tax profession". Gerry Hart, President of the Chartered Institute of Taxation, the professional body for tax advisers, said: "He's bringing tax into the election debate again, which I thought is what they didn't want to do. The way to stop all this scare-mongering would be to publish their proposals. "If the firms are just setting out what they think might happen, there's nothing wrong with it. If they're saying 'this will happen', that's pushing it too far." Ernst & Young said: "Some degree of educated guessing is inevitable and we haven't disguised that. We would be delighted to comment on a fully fledged tax policy document from Labour." Brian Mawhinney, the Conservative Party chairman, said: "If Mr Brown doesn't like it he has a simple remedy, he should publish the tax plans and be damned." Notebook, page 11

CBI fuels Tory fears of factory job losses

Richard Thomas and Simon Bawley

CONSERVATIVE fears that widespread factory job losses will damage the party's election prospects were underlined yesterday by a survey showing manufacturers shedding staff faster than for two years. Labour seized on news from the Confederation of British Industry that 16,000 workers were laid off between January and March to attack the Government. Following the leak of a memo revealing the fears of the Trade and Industry Secretary, Ian Lang, that thousands of manufacturing staff faced redundancy, the CBI's quarterly poll of 1,235 industrial companies confirmed that plummeting export orders had driven output to its lowest level since October 1993. Tony Blair, opening a Labour conference setting out the party's industrial policy plans to business, said Mr Lang and his colleagues pretended in public that policies were delivering a buoyant labour market, but knew the reality was different. The CBI said companies were optimistic that output and orders will bounce back in the current quarter as the domestic economy picks up. But previous hopes of an upturn have been dashed, and CBI officials were reluctant to predict an improvement. Even if order books fill up, the survey suggests job prospects will remain bleak.

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Peers blow hole in asylum bill

Alan Travis
Home Affairs Editor

A HOUSE of Lords rebellion led by the unlikely figures of the Duke of Norfolk and the Bishop of Norwich last night put a large hole in legislation by the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, seeking to curb the rights of asylum seekers.

The peers voted by 143 to 124 to exempt torture victims and those who have fled from countries with a recent record of torture from the bill's "white list" provisions and the new "fast-track procedure" for dealing with asylum applicants.

Home Office ministers claimed that the new provision would be widely exploited by the unscrupulous to undermine the effect of the bill in dealing with bogus asylum claims.

Among the five Conservative peers who rebelled were the Duke of Norfolk, Britain's premier Roman Catholic peer, and Lord Boyd Carpenter, the father-in-law of Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister. They were joined by four bishops, 38 cross-benchers and Labour and Liberal Democrat peers. The rebellion was largely organised behind the scenes by the Liberal Democrat Lady Williams.

Home Office ministers said last night they would consider the concerns raised in the Lords. The Government may face a stiff task in overturning the defeat when the bill returns to the Commons as it only narrowly survived an earlier vote.

The Bishop of Liverpool, the Rt Rev David Sheppard, moving the successful amendment, said that torture victims were the most vulner-

able people in the world and most of those who applied for asylum came from India, Pakistan, Ghana, Sri Lanka, Somalia and other countries which had historical ties of empire to Britain.

He said the motive behind Mr Howard's bill was to introduce a harsh regime to deter asylum seekers from applying to Britain at all.

Asylum claims from the seven designated "white list" countries would be presumed to be unfounded and put through a procedure which would give them only 10 days to produce the necessary documents. Dr Sheppard said that was too soon to be able to produce medical evidence and was an inappropriate procedure for torture victims.

"They should be removed from the scope of this clause," he said.

The white list countries so far designated are India, Pakistan, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Ghana, Poland and Romania.

The Duke of Norfolk said he supported the amendment because more and more torture was taking place in the world. He said it was not enough just to rely on the evidence of scars: "When I was in Germany a prisoner was put outside and a bucket of water poured over him. He was left outside to freeze. That was just as much torture as ripping and lashing."

The Home Office Minister, Lord Elton, in unsuccessfully trying to stem the rebellion, warned that the new provision would lead to large numbers trying to evade the accelerated procedures for dealing with asylum seekers.

"There are very few countries where there are allegations of brutality by the enforcement agencies but it does not mean it is widespread," she said.

Syrian leader's snub snuffs US peace mission

David Hirst in Beirut and Derek Brown in Jerusalem

PRESIDENT Hafez al-Assad of Syria delivered yesterday what appeared to be a monumental snub to Warren Christopher, the United States secretary of state, as he pursued his apparently floundering mission to end the Israeli-Palestinian war in Lebanon.

Mr Christopher arrived in Damascus in the afternoon on the latest stage of his shuttle diplomacy only to be told by Farouk al-Shara, the foreign minister, that Mr Assad was not available to receive him. He left the Syrian capital after two-and-a-half hours and flew to Tel Aviv.

Nicholas Burns, the state department spokesman, said Mr Christopher had talked to Mr al-Shara during his journey from the airport to Damascus before Mr Assad's snub. They had discussed Israel's latest ideas on how to end the confrontation in Lebanon.

"He had a good conversation with Shara. He passed on some ideas," Mr Burns said.

Israel's main demand for calling off its bombardment is that Syria guarantees a pledge by Hizbullah guerrillas to permanently end their Katyusha rocket attacks on northern Israel.

Shimon Peres, the Israeli prime minister, speaking before news of Mr Christopher's aborted mission, said Israel was demanding a written agreement — and not merely an extension of the verbal undertaking in 1993 to avoid civilian targets.

The understanding ended Israel's last big blitz on Lebanon.

Mr Peres has put all his trust in Washington's ability to negotiate a way out of the crisis.

In an interview in yesterday's *Ma'ariv* daily newspaper, he said of his latest telephone conversation with President Bill Clinton: "He was simply outstanding. Just outstanding. He expressed support and understanding."

"I told him that what is happening is part of the (May 29 Israeli election campaign) — but not for me, against me."

"They want to depose us. He was very positive."

The Syrian rebuttal abruptly ended Israel's hopes that the US could deliver a ceasefire before last night's start of Independence Day celebrations.

Mr Christopher had come from Jerusalem, where he had been discussing Mr Assad's views on the US peace plan with Mr Peres.

It was Mr Christopher's third visit to Damascus since he began his mission. He spent five hours with Mr Assad on Monday, who turned a deaf ear to an Israeli proposal for an immediate truce, pending the conclusion of a written agreement for an enduring ceasefire.

The snub reflected Syria's determination to exploit to the full what it sees as the failure of Israel's military campaign in Lebanon.

Syrian officials do not advertise their gratification, but state-controlled Damascus papers have fewer inhibitions. The *Syrian Times* said: "The Israeli aggression went wrong for both Israel and the US, which are now on the defensive."

"It is now necessary to go beyond a simple ceasefire agreement that could collapse at any moment. The fundamental issue — which is the Israeli occupation of South Lebanon — must be tackled. The Lebanese army must replace the Israeli one."

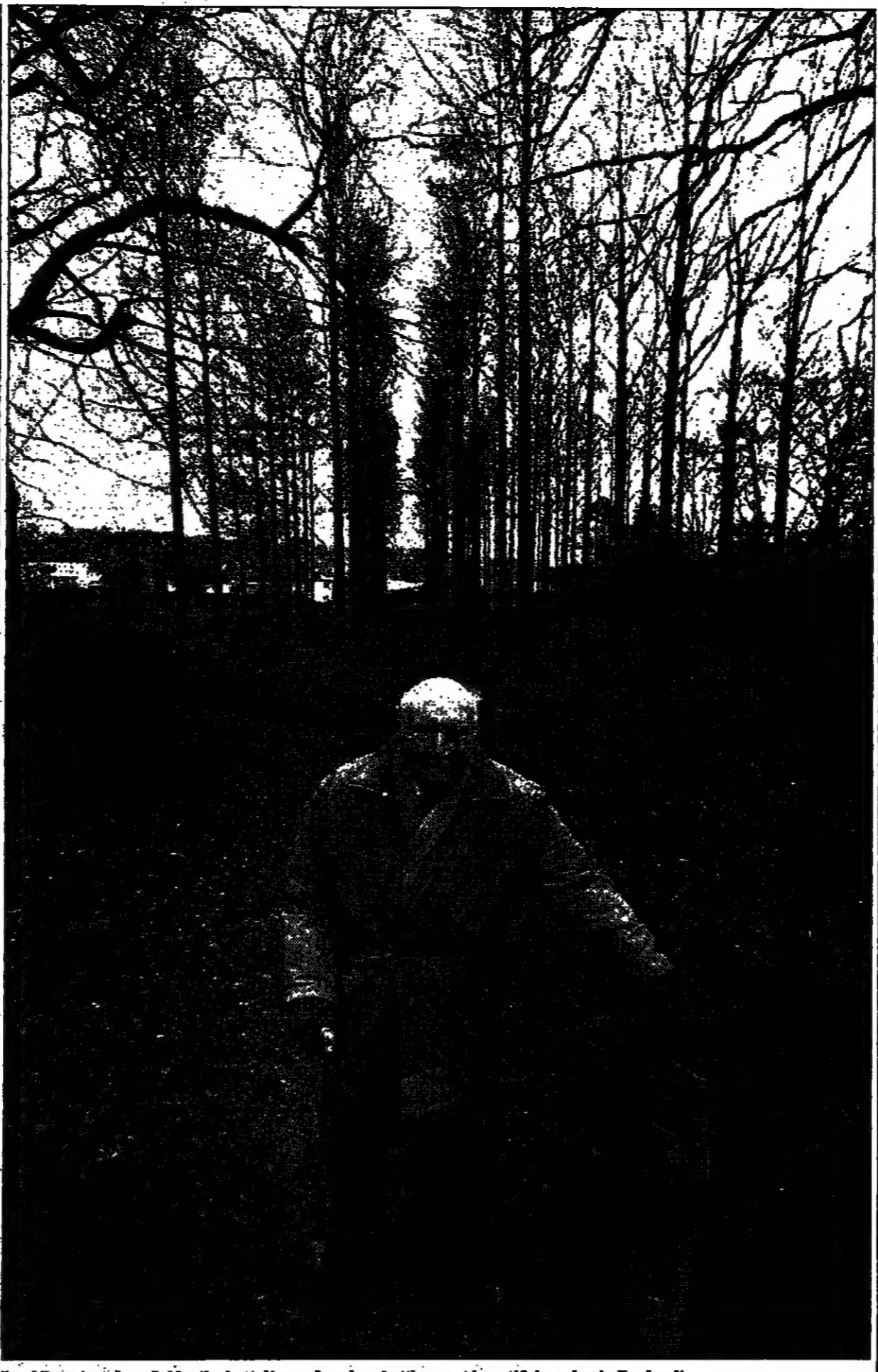
The paper said the French peace plan had a much better chance of success because it was based on the UN Security Council resolution 426 of 1978. The resolution calls for an unconditional Israeli withdrawal from Lebanese territory.

Meanwhile in Qana, southern Lebanon, workmen began digging a mass grave for the more than 100 Lebanese refugees who were killed in the Israeli shelling of the UN base on April 18.

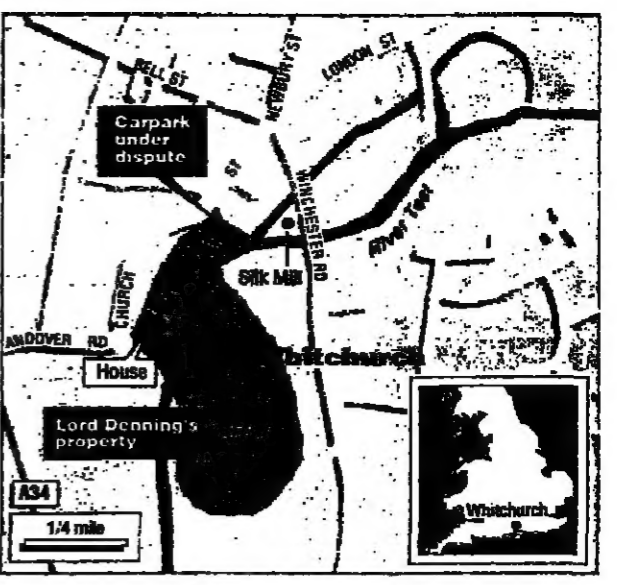
Hassan Fetouh, in charge of the work, said the funeral would be held after Israel ended its blitz. Nasri Abu Dih, a worker, wept as he operated an excavator.

"I count them all as my parents, my children and my family," he said.

"Strong man" Peres fights his last battle, page 6



Lord Denning, dwarfed by the battalions of poplars in 'the most beautiful garden in England' PHOTOGRAPH BY GARRY WEASER



Denning fights for his garden

Planners find old age has not dimmed the fire of a former judge

Sarah Boseley

THE former Master of the Rolls can take his favourite walk down the prime rose path nowadays only if he has an arm to lean on. There are benches where he can rest, but below the battalions of poplars he planted 30 years ago. But where 87-year-old Lord Denning perceives an injustice, old age has not dimmed his fire.

As the planners who want to build a car park on a slice of his land are finding out, "This is part of my garden and I rely on the legal principle that an Englishman's house is his castle. Everything within my fence is my castle and they have no right to come on it in any way."

"It is an absolute imperative to say they will put a compulsory purchase order on it," he thundered yesterday.

Lord Denning and the village of Whitby, Hampshire, have a symbiotic relationship. Above the chemist's shop is a plaque claiming his birthplace, son of a draper. Village guides point out the Lawn, the derelict house he bought in 1963 which was the wartime headquarters of the Bank of England. Its greenhouse runs to the River Test. Lord Denning's acres extend on the far side to an ESA (environmentally sensitive area) where he grazes sheep.

"It was left in a dreadful state," he said. "I made this

the most beautiful garden in England. Look at my poplars — aren't they splendid?"

Peter Post, once clerk to the Master of the Rolls, is estate manager. "Lord Denning is a keen conservationist," he said. "He will fight tooth and nail. He is asking the local authority for chapter and verse as to the law under which they can take away an Englishman's home and castle."

Basingstoke and Deane Council's planning department argues that the poplar plantation is the only undeveloped land close enough to the centre of the village to be suitable for car parking. A small car park nearby needs to be replaced. Besides, the proposal would allow people greater access — across Lord Denning's land — to the river, an idea which induces further poplery in the lori.

The proposals were published in the borough local plan last year, said Tim Marsh, senior planning officer, but there was no thunderbolt from his lordship until the detailed plans were published in January. "He didn't comment, so we could only assume he was willing to have it developed as a car park."

A compromise has been formulated. Basingstoke will not slap a compulsory purchase order on the Denning half-acre until it is forced to use the other car park to build affordable housing, which is unlikely for some years.

Behind it lurks the question of Lord Denning's continued longevity, but assumptions on this score may be foolish. "I was a seven month baby," he chuckled. "I was so small I could be put in a pint pot. But I've managed to live for 97 years." And he shows every sign of wanting to carry on for many more.

Teachers relieved of 'violent' boy

John Carvel
Education Editor

TEACHERS at Glaisdale school in Nottingham will be asked today to lift their strike threat after a deal last night allowing them to avoid contact with Richard Wilding, the allegedly violent 13-year-old whom they tried to have expelled.

The boy's parents agreed with David Higgins, the head teacher, and Nottinghamshire education authority, on a regime to let the boy stay on the school roll but segregated from other pupils for the time being.

For five half-days a week he would be taught at the school by Mr Higgins or a teacher brought in from a special unit. For two half-days he would be taught at home, and for three half-days he would go to a pupil referral unit — one of the "sin bins" set up to rehabilitate disruptive pupils.

Hilary Freeman, the solicitor representing the boy's parents, said negotiations with the head and local authority had been constructive and the arrangement would lead to Richard's reintegration at Glaisdale. The arrangements will be reviewed monthly.

It was still unclear last night whether the deal would satisfy 20 teachers in the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers who threatened to strike indefinitely from Friday unless the boy was removed. It would have been the first teachers' strike over discipline for 10 years.

They have complained that Richard was involved in more than 30 incidents and suspended four times since November.

He was permanently excluded in February for threatening behaviour, disobedience and disruption, but the expulsion order was overturned by an appeals panel after Rita Wilding, his mother, said the complaints were exaggerated and did not justify his removal.

Nigel de Gruchy, the association's general secretary, said the boy's remaining on the school roll was bound to give his members cause for concern, but would not comment on the prospects for strike action until they had had time to study it.

"At the moment it's not very promising... But I don't want to prejudge what our members might decide to do either way," he said.

A spokesman for the education authority said teachers need no longer regard Richard's presence as a health and safety risk, since they would not teach him.

The 18 Glaisdale teachers belonging to other unions had earlier indicated they could live with the boy remaining at the school if they did not have to teach him.

Fred Riddell, chairman of the education authority, said he hoped Richard would respond positively and be "fully reintegrated... in time".

The authority would not disclose the cost of the regime, thought to include £100 a day for a specialist supply teacher. The school would be meeting its legal responsibility to Richard, and the cost would be met from the council's special needs budget.

Philip Wilding, the boy's father, said: "We are quite happy with the arrangement. It is now up to the union — if it is unacceptable to them then it is tough luck."

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John, the European Union isn't working. Moreover, if we have to break the law to force a fair deal then that is further evidence that we have a Europe of bureaucrats and bent rules. Today it is British beef that demonstrates the Euro-shambles of Brussels.

John Biffen page 9

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Miss A describes alleged attack at 'castle' belonging to millionaire businessman and chairman of Blackpool FC

Oyston denies raping models



David Ward
A FORMER teenage model claimed yesterday that she lost her virginity during a rape attack by the millionaire businessman, Owen Oyston, at his 'castle' in north Lancashire. "I told him not to do it to me. I told him not to have sex with me," said the woman, now aged 25 and married, on the first day of a trial at Liverpool crown court. "He kept saying 'I could learn you a few things'."

Mr Oyston, aged 62, of Cloughton Hall, near Lancaster, has denied raping Miss A, and raping and indecently assaulting Miss B. Miss A, who said she was aged either 17 or 18 at the time, said she had been introduced to Mr Oyston, chair-

man of Blackpool Football Club, by Peter Martin, the boss of the Manchester modelling agency with which she and Miss B were registered. She described Mr Oyston as "quite sleazy". She told the jury of eight women and four men that she was driven one evening to Mr Oyston's home but did not know where she was going or why. She arrived in the dark at about midnight and Mr Oyston opened the front door. "He said 'Come inside. I'd like to show you round the house'. I was scared."

After seeing the entrance hall and the dining room, she was taken upstairs to the main bedroom where there was a four-poster bed with drapes. She asked if she could go to the bathroom. "I was petrified. I was in the middle of nowhere with a man that I hardly knew," she told Helen Grindrod QC, prosecuting. When she returned from the bathroom after 10 minutes, Mr Oyston was sitting on the bed. "He had his shirt on, no trousers and no underwear," she said, adding that she had obeyed his instruction to sit next to him. "Why?" asked Ms Grindrod. "Because I was scared, young and frightened. He told me to remove my underwear."

She removed her knickers. "I had a dress and jacket on. He then laid down next to me, leaned over and pinched his hands across my chest. I didn't want him to do anything. I said nothing." "He climbed on top of me and tried to insert his penis. He just said 'Shut up and do as you are told'. I was a virgin. He was going up and down on me and breathing heavily. Eventually I struggled and pushed him away. He said I was being stupid. I then got up and put my knickers back on."

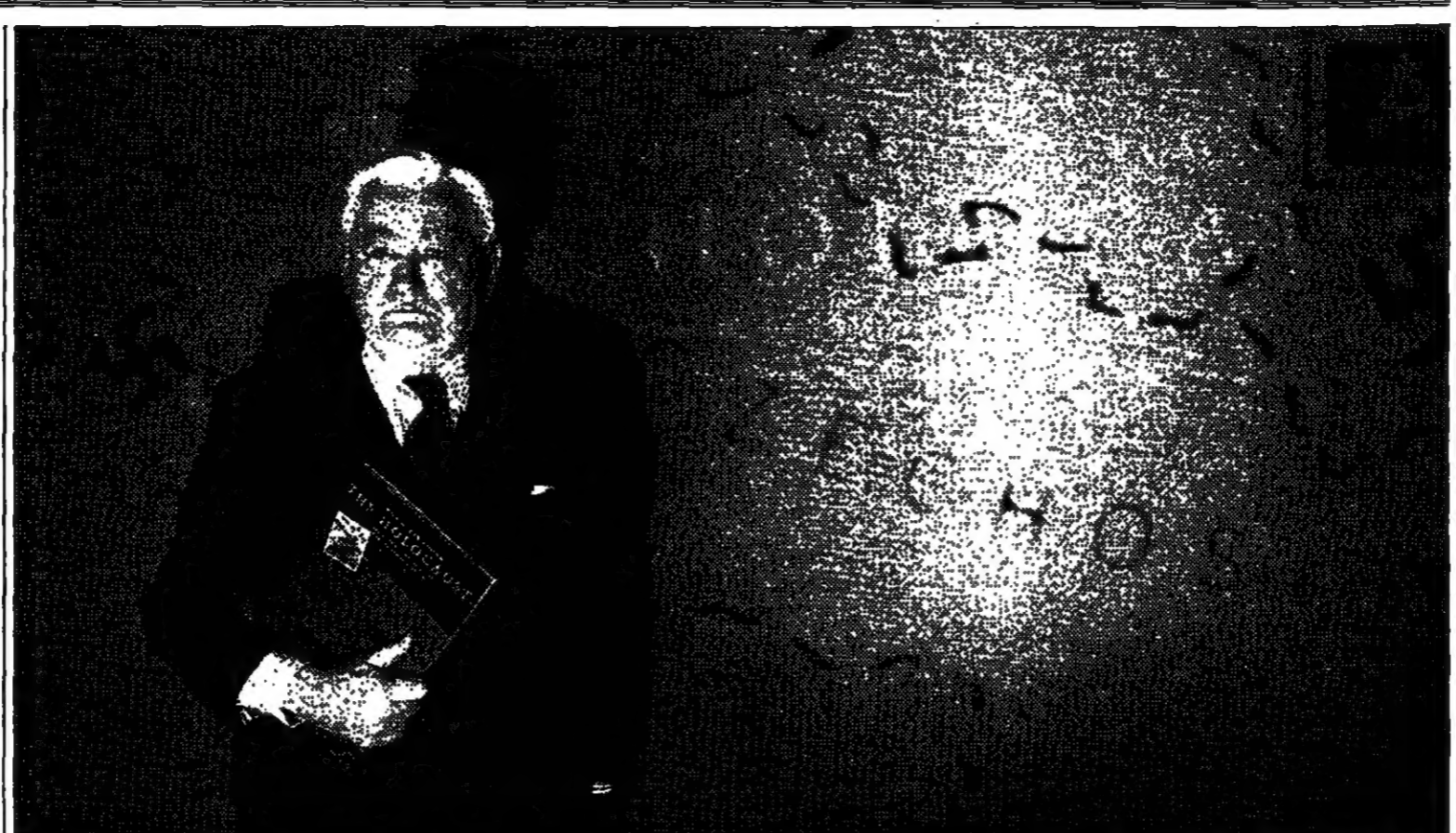
She was taken back to the house in south Manchester where she lived, and took a shower and a sleeping tablet. Asked about her state of mind, she said: "In absolute turmoil. Disgusted with myself." She told no one of the alleged rape and stayed on the books of the modelling agency because her parents in Grimsby were pressuring her to do well in her career. She said Mr Oyston had given her £200 and £700 on two separate occasions. She had met him while on modelling engagements in London and had had dinner with him, his secretary, and the late Robert Maxwell. "Mr Oyston tried to come up to my [hotel] room but I wouldn't allow him to come in."

Sack racist, says student union

Gary Younge
STUDENTS at Edinburgh University have called for the sacking of a psychology lecturer who claims black people are less intelligent than whites, and has defined himself as "a scientific racist". The university's student union executive unanimously backed calls for the sacking of Professor Brand, whose book *The g Factor* was recently withdrawn by publishers, "to be removed permanently from his teaching responsibilities". Their stance was supported by a two-thirds majority at a full meeting of students last night. Union vice-president Catherine Bromley said: "It is time for us to take a strong and resolved stance on this issue. What remains paramount is the needs and desires of the students are met and their confidence restored." The furore over the book erupted 10 days ago when Mr Brand told the press he was "proud to be racist in a scientific sense". It is a scientific fact that black Americans are less intelligent than white Americans. He went on to suggest that single mothers should be persuaded to mate with higher IQ males to widen the gene pool of their offspring with some intelligent forbears. "They should be encouraged to have sex with higher IQ boys. We could teach these girls that it would be highly advantageous."

Two-year-olds sent to school 'like animals'

John Carvel
Education Editor
A SURGE in the number of two-year-olds at independent prep schools yesterday prompted a leading headmistress to warn that children were being treated "like young animals", staying with their mothers only as long as they were biologically dependent. "Women these days want to be married and have children, but they also want to carry on their careers," said Paddy Holmes, head of Ditcham Park School in Petersfield, Hampshire, and chairwoman of the Independent Schools Association. "For some, a prep school is the only alternative to a nanny. It works well socially and educationally, but we may live to reap the dividends in social terms of children separated from their parents from the age of two." Mrs Holmes was commenting on a survey by the Independent Schools Information Service (ISIS) showing there are 4,584 two-year-olds at prep school this year, an increase of 27 per cent over 1995. A slight rise in the total of pupils of all ages in private education was entirely accounted for by the boom in places for children under six. "We are really beginning as a nation to produce children treated in many ways more like young animals, staying with their mothers only as long as they are biologically dependent," she said. Research done over many years showed the younger children were taken away from their mothers the more



Lord Bramall, chairman of trustees: Project within museum's remit as an objective historical account

Holocaust given permanent exhibition site

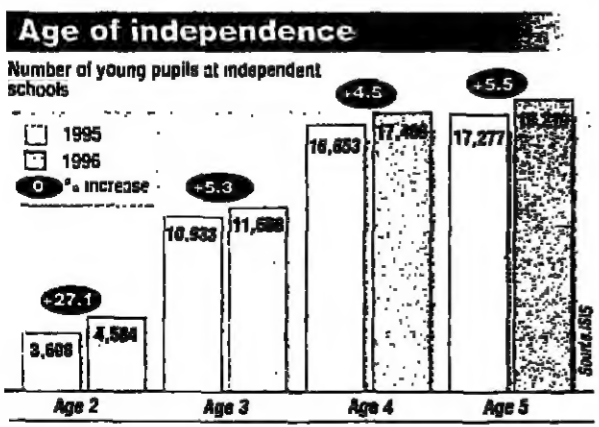
David Fairhall
THE Imperial War Museum is to mark the millennium by opening a permanent Holocaust exhibition in south London. The museum's director, Robert Crawford, said yesterday that the £13 million plans would meet a clear demand from schools which now teach the history of Nazi Germany's

slaughter of 6 million Jews as part of the national curriculum. The exhibition would fill a gap in the museum's coverage of 20th century war and address important moral questions. Ordinary men and women had taken part in the Holocaust or turned a blind eye. People might now be prompted to ask: "How would I have responded in such a situation?"

Asked if the exhibition would make any reference to modern examples of "ethnic cleansing", Mr Crawford disclosed that the museum had originally intended to include the story of the Holocaust in a display covering other instances of genocide. But it was decided this would be unmanageable. Instead, there will be a smaller, adjacent exhibition on "total war" dealing with the effect on civilians.

Rabbi Hugo Gryn, a survivor of the Nazi concentration camps, said the exhibition was "late, but not too late". It would help to "inculcate" future generations against racism. The former archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Runcie, who as a young soldier reached Belsen just after the camp was liberated, recalled that when asked if there was such a thing as a just war, he had often

replied: "A war that closed down Belsen was a war worth fighting." Field Marshal Lord Bramall, chairman of the museum's trustees, said the project was completely within their remit. It was an objective historical account. Provided the money can be raised, in part through a bid for heritage lottery funds, it is planned to open the exhibition in 1999.



School fortifies its dinners by buying bread and butter

Wivik Chaudhary
ASCHOOL is buying bread and butter to supplement meagre school dinners. Lionel Gent, headmaster of Polytan school, Southampton, for children with special needs, acted after staff and parents complained many pupils were going hungry. The meals, costing £1.10 each, are supplied by Hampshire Caterers and consist of salad, a hot fish and dessert. Mr Gent said: "Most days there is simply not enough on the plates. Bigger schools

MP accuses Blair press aide

David Pallister
TONY Blair's press secretary, Alastair Campbell, was accused in the High Court yesterday of orchestrating a false and misleading story about the Tory MP Rupert Allason four years ago when he was political editor of the Daily Mirror.

Mr Allason, who is demanding damages for malicious falsehood, claimed that Mr Campbell and two journalist colleagues concocted and then reported an early day motion in the Commons that attacked the MP. Launching his 24th civil litigation - 23 won, one drawn, by his own

account - Mr Allason was as usual presenting his own case. He maintained that the story was the culmination of a campaign of animosity against him after he had criticised Robert Maxwell, the Mirror's former owner, who died in 1991. In response to a 1992 attack on Mr Maxwell by Mr Allason, a Mirror editorial accused him of cowardly and dishonourable behaviour. Mr Allason sued and won £200,000 damages and an apology on November 16 1992.

On November 20 the Mirror published a one paragraph story based on an early day motion which said that Mr Allason "was challenged by 50 MPs last night to demonstrate his concern for Maxwell pensioners by giving them his estimated £250,000 libel damages. Mr Allason won the money from the Daily Mirror over articles concerning Robert Maxwell." The story, Mr Allason said, was "untrue in almost every respect". But he added: "The first defendant [Mr Campbell] is a very powerful figure in the Labour Party and is somewhat feared by Labour members of parliament." The Mirror says Mr Allason had agreed to drop his complaint in return for the apology and Mr Campbell's letter. The case continues.

Eternal youthfulness endears Cliff to female heart



Gary Younge
HIS IS the same age as Hunton leader Jimmy Knapp, dresses like the man from C&A, and has not had sex in 36 years. Meet women's top choice for an ideal lover - Sir Cliff Richard (left). The 55-year-old Peter Pan of pop is also the man most women want to marry, ac-

ording to a poll to be published in *Bella* magazine this week. Sir Cliff, who is set to play Heathcliff in the musical adaptation of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* in September, breaks most hearts in the 44-55 age bracket, where a third wanted to be his real-life living doll. Across the whole 15-65 age range he enjoys the affections of 20

per cent. In second place as a lover, and in top place for the young, was film star Hugh Grant, with 15 per cent of all age ranges voting for him. Not surprisingly, given recent very public indiscretion, Grant does not go down as such a popular choice for a husband, slipping to 11 per cent. In third place behind comedian Robbie Coltrane.

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I was taken aback when a twin-set and pearls acolyte asked me if I had seen Ricki's drag queen show. Interpreting my silence as disapproval the acolyte leapt down my throat: "Oh God, Imogen, how not nineties! It's absolutely brilliant. It's like Dame Edna, Mrs Doubtfire, Priscilla and The Crying Game all rolled into one."
 Imogen Stubbs G2 page 4

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صوتك من الامم

Sack racist, says student union

Sack racist, says student union... The student union has voted to sack a lecturer who is accused of racism...

Council heads off RCN debate with 'policy' ban for life

David Brindle on reaction to outcry



Delegates to the RCN congress in Bournemouth, which today debates whether a convicted criminal can re-enter the profession

Rapists face nursing bar

CONVICTED rapists are to be effectively barred from the register of nurses under plans by the profession's regulatory body...

ways in which there might be particular crimes for which there would not normally be restoration to the register unless there were compelling reasons to do so...

who listen to the evidence and who bear their own accountability for the decision they make...

Boxing handled with kid gloves

NURSES yesterday came out heavily against the idea of banning boxing, parting company with doctors on the issue...

body was "no longer independent". The move reflects nurses' anger at the review body's endorsement over the past two years of government plans for local pay determination...

Chief justice in legal challenge

THE Lord Chief Justice could face an embarrassing legal challenge in one of his own courts as a long-simmering row over barristers' monopoly threatens to come to a head...

Division, headed by the Lord Chief Justice. The judges' opposition means that six years after the Courts and Legal Services Act, which was meant to end barristers' monopoly on higher court advocacy...

Beaten buskers ponder change of tune on Tube

BUSKERS failed yesterday in their High Court battle for the legal right to entertain on the London Underground...



Franco de Cristoforo blows his horn outside the High Court

LT spokeswoman Ann Laker said later the authority was considering whether there should be a change in the rules...

'Gay sex in club' report leads judge to resign

A PART-TIME judge has resigned after allegations that he was involved in gay sex with two men at a sauna club...

Hopes fade for lone sailor missing from fire-hit yacht

POLICE were continuing their search yesterday for a missing sailor whose fire-damaged boat was found drifting off Cornwall...

William Grindley, harbour master for the Beaulieu River, said Mr Jardine had been seen on the river...

Newspaper report 'invaded Selina Scott's privacy'

TELEVISION presenter Selina Scott's privacy was invaded in a newspaper story about an affair she was alleged to have had 15 years ago...

The commission said it had to consider the extent to which people had put their private lives into the public domain when adjudicating on breaches of privacy...

Mail for serialising a book by Nick Leeson, the man who brought down Barings Bank, and is serving a jail sentence in Singapore for fraud...

News in brief

Extradition case opens in S Africa

THE legal battle by John Paul Gecican to avoid extradition to the US finally got under way in a Johannesburg magistrate's court yesterday when his lawyers accused Interpol of "hiring and releasing him" into South Africa to secure his arrest...

Judge frees woman

A JUDGE freed a sex-change woman from jail yesterday after deciding a £15,000 trial on a charge of importing would be a waste of money...

Search fails to find body

POLICE yesterday dug up the garden of a house in Wood End, Coventry, in search of the body of a teenage mother who disappeared four years ago on the way to visit her parents...

Cruelty to animals

Table showing reported cases of cruelty to animals in 1995 and 1994. Categories include Dogs, Cats, Horses & donkeys, Cattle, Sheep, Pigs, and Wildlife. A separate table lists five most common offences: Neglect (1650), Abandonment (65), Ill treatment (28), Beat/Club (8), and Improper killing (7).

THE RSPCA yesterday called for a nationwide scheme of dog registration using microchips. Releasing its annual figures for reported cases of animal cruelty, the society pointed out that dogs remained the largest category despite a fall in the number of cases by one fifth...

Lottery cash for disabled

HEALTH, disability and care organisations were yesterday invited to apply for cash from a £160 million National Lottery grants scheme. Winners will be announced in the autumn...

Girl trapped in club

NEW fears about an unlicensed "rave" club were expressed yesterday after an 18-year-old girl ended up trapped inside it for 38 hours. Ann-Marie Conner was rescued by firemen who cut through heavy steel doors of the Coliseum club at Stockton, Cleveland...

Evans to stay at Radio 1

CHRIS Evans (right), hailed as the saviour of Radio 1, has signed a one-year extension to his £1 million-plus contract with the BBC. It was announced yesterday. With more than 7 million listeners a week, his show has been credited with turning round Radio 1's ratings, adding more than 500,000 listeners after 5 million deserted in two years...



MR WALDEN For a 10 minute to the USA? Only £1.18 with us. Includes a small table with flight information.

Wary traders draw line in the swamp

In the last of a series on Sino-Russian relations, James Meek in Vladivostok looks at a new demarcation of the frontier and finds locals afraid that if they give an inch, Beijing will take a mile

TATIYANA is a trader who has shopped all over and in the end decided the shops next door were best. "I went to Turkey, and Poland, but that takes an awful lot of time. China's very convenient. I've been there 30 times, once a month." It takes a little over six hours by bus for Tatiyana to get from Vladivostok to the teeming bazaars of China's north-eastern province of Jilin. No visa is needed. She shops for cheap clothes and sells them every weekend at the Chinese Market in the Russian port, earning incomparably more than she used to working 70 hours a week as a senior gynaecologist. She is delighted with the open border, admires the Chi-

nese and wishes Russia built such good roads. But when it comes to Moscow's agreement with Beijing to give China a few acres of swampland, a deal endorsed by President Boris Yeltsin, she is as indignant and stubborn as any other Russian Far Easterner. "What belongs to us shouldn't be given away to anyone," she said. "The border post shouldn't be moved one single centimetre." The rising opposition in Russia's Pacific Maritime Territory to the handover of the land, led by the regional governor, Yevgeny Nazdratenko, is an inconvenience for Mr Yeltsin as he begins his trip to Beijing. It is also hard to counter since Mr Nazdratenko, who is travelling with him, is backing the president

against the wind and alee, explained that it was an article of faith among Russians that Chinese goods were shoddy, so the Chinese did not bother offering anything well-made. "If you tried to import a leather jacket worth \$500, they'd think you were cheating them," he said. "It's only worthwhile bringing in \$200 jackets. They don't understand that the \$300 Reebok trainers you can buy in Moscow are probably made in China." Meek says as it is, the market is a revolution for a city which was opened to foreigners four years ago. But Russians who would seem to be making a good living from the China trade turn out to be embittered supporters of radical measures to shut it down. Irina Zeiko, who has bought in Jilin and sold in Russia once a week for more than two years, said she would like to see the frontier closed for a time to allow Russian industrial entrepreneurs to catch up with the Chinese.

"When Gorbachev was president, he allowed co-operatives to be set up and freed them from taxes," she said. "Many people organised small businesses. But instead of allowing them to develop the government opened the borders. People just abandoned their businesses and started trading." Relations between the two groups of traders had cooled recently, she said. Chinese coming to Russia were now subject to a stricter visa regime and on her last visit to the Chinese town of Dumin, the windows on her bus had been broken by locals after an argument about rotten fruit. All the ambivalence of the Maritime Territory towards its relationship with China has come to focus on a patch of ponds and bogs covering four square miles on the left bank of the River Tuman, where the borders of Russia, China and North Korea meet. According to an agreement signed between China and the



Soviet Union in 1991 just before the latter disintegrated, the demarcation of the Russian-Chinese border now being completed will see this land returned to China. Hostility to the handover is virtually universal in the Maritime Territory. Quoting from a report by an obscure group of patriotic Moscow an-

alysts, which talks of the balance of "white" and "yellow" races in Asia, Mr Nazdratenko claims the new land would enable the Chinese to build a port with access to the Sea of Japan, drawing custom away from the Trans-Siberian railway and the ports around Vladivostok. In fact, Russia and North Korea would remain in control of access to the sea and China shows every sign of wanting to use the Maritime Territory's ports. But most Maritime citizens prefer to believe the Nazdratenko version — he was elected by a huge margin last year. Historians say that the swamp contains the remains of Soviet soldiers killed in a battle with Japanese troops in the 1930s. Local Cossacks claim the land is theirs. Environmentalists say Chinese-financed wetland would destroy a delicate ecosystem of world importance. And a Russian general involved in demarcation work resigned

in protest at the handover. Beneath all these concerns lurks a deeper fear — that a tiny concession to China now would only encourage the Chinese to reclaim the whole Maritime Territory, an area larger than Belgium ceded to Moscow in 1860 when Beijing was backing under French and British attack. Even Vladimir Stegny, who as the territory's international economic relations chief wants to see north-east China and the Russian Far East expand their economies together, said he feared an overpopulated China a decade hence would find the sparsely peopled Russian lands irresistible. "I fear... there will be some kind of redistribution, particularly since the Chinese are paying so much attention to the modernisation of their armed forces," he said. "That's why Russia shouldn't be making even these small territorial concessions now."

World news in brief

Paraguay leader appeals for calm

PARAGUAY'S President Juan Carlos Wasmosy, whose whereabouts were unknown for several hours following a rebellion by his army chief, reappeared in public yesterday and called for calm. "I ask you to return to your homes in peace," he told a cheering crowd of thousands outside the government house. "Everything will be solved, for the good of all of us, without winners or losers," the president said. Mr Wasmosy, Paraguay's first democratically elected president in nearly 60 years, sacked General Lino Oviedo on Monday, accusing him of breaking a constitutional ban on military participation in politics. The general, who has made no secret of his ambition to be the 1998 presidential candidate for the ruling Colorado Party, reacted by retreating to his barracks with his troops and demanding the president quit instead. But the navy, air force and police backed Mr Wasmosy, joining the United States and Latin American leaders. Mr Wasmosy yesterday called Gen Oviedo's defiance an "abuse of power" and ordered Oviedo to return to his barracks. Oviedo's followers in the congress accused the president of retaliation after they last week blocked a government move to award control of two toll bridges on the Brazilian border to companies reportedly owned by Mr Wasmosy. — Reuters and AP, Asunción.

Croatian bones of contention

PRESIDENT Franjo Tudjman wants the remains of historically prominent Croats, including the late Yugoslav communist dictator, Josip Broz Tito, and the head of Croatia's second world war fascist regime, Ante Pavelic, to be returned to their homeland. "I support the idea that the bones of every Croatian man who lived for Croatia be returned to Croatia as well," Mr Tudjman said in an interview published yesterday in the government-controlled newspaper, Vecernji List. "Why leave Pavelic out of it?" Pavelic's pro-Nazi Ustashe regime murdered tens of thousands of Serbs, Jews and Gypsies between 1941 and 1945. "[Pavelic's] idea of creating a Croatian state contained positive things, but it must be acknowledged that in the implementation of his policy he made terrible mistakes," Mr Tudjman said. He said on Monday "no more" than 40,000 people were killed under Ustashe rule. Most historians put the number slaughtered at the Jasenovac death camp alone at 80,000. — Reuters, Zagreb.

Kurds put Turkey in the dock

THE first European Court of Human Rights cases involving Kurds who allege that they have been tortured and expelled from their homes by Turkish authorities, are due to be heard in Strasbourg this week. One of the applicants, Zeki Aksoy, aged 22, has since been killed. He claimed he was beaten, given electric shocks and hung by his arms. His father blames Turkish soldiers for the death. The landmark cases, supported by the London-based Kurdish Human Rights Project, represent the first time the Turkish government has had to face such public accusations from its Kurdish population in a European forum. Ankara has long been a member of the Council of Europe, but previous cases reaching the European Court in Strasbourg have involved individuals from Turkish Communist or revolutionary parties. — Owen Botocot.

Gang suspects in murder

THE murder in Los Angeles of the Oscar-winning star of The Killers, Burt Reynolds, was the work of an Asian street gang, police believe. He was found shot dead in the driveway of his home near LA's Chinatown in February, with \$3,000 still inside his wallet. But after interviewing relatives who saw him earlier that night, police have returned to their original robbery theory. They believe he was holding a \$20,000 Rolex watch and gold chain and jewels he wore, containing a photograph of his wife who was killed by the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia in the 1970s. Both items were missing from his body. It is believed his killers, said to be members of the Oriental Laundry gang, over-looked the wallet. — New York Daily News.

Cult leader goes on trial

POLICE officers check a car trying to enter the compound of the Aum Shinrikyo doomsday cult at the foot of Mount Fuji in Japan, where several of the group's disciples remain. Shoko Asahara, the cult's leader, goes on trial today for allegedly masterminding last year's deadly nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subway. The bearded, self-proclaimed messiah was arrested when police swooped on the Mount Fuji commune last May. Mr Asahara has spent the past 11 months in custody, and his cult — which once boasted more than 10,000 followers — has since declared bankruptcy and been ordered to fish-bone. Nerve gas producing chemicals killed 12 and made more than 5,500 others ill in the subway attack Mr Asahara allegedly masterminded last March. — AP, Tokyo.



Riding high... Aggrieved residents of Zurich's Münsterstrasse street fixed their bicycles to window frames yesterday after the landlord closed down a bicycle parking space to make way for a new restaurant. PHOTOGRAPH: RENE MEIER

Prodi vows to bring stability

Italian cabinet to be beholden to the left. The outgoing prime minister, Lamberto Dini, has apparently been given his pick of jobs on offer. There was speculation that Antonio Di Pietro, the former star of Italy's anti-corruption campaign, could be offered the justice or interior portfolios and that Umberto Eco, the author and a noted supporter of the centre-left, might be named arts minister. Prof Prodi said there was nothing preventing him talking to Mr Di Pietro, but thought it unlikely that Italy's best-known author would accept a job. Meanwhile, Silvio Berlusconi, Prof Prodi's defeated opponent, was hinting there might be something suspicious about the election results. The centre-left won an outright majority of seats in the senate, but will need the support of orthodox Communists to pass legislation. "We are very worried by certain numbers which are coming out," Mr Berlusconi said. "A series of alarm signals are reaching us with regard to spoil votes." Speculation continued about whether Mr Berlusconi might now leave politics. The cumbersome constitutional machinery for dealing with changes of government means the centre-left will be unable to take over before the middle of next month. Nothing can happen until parliament is convened on May 9.

After the inferno, cinema paradiso

Julian Berger in Sarajevo reports on the odyssey of a group of film lovers bearing the movies Bosnians missed in the war. THE first cinema they came to in Bihac had been closed for four years. Daylight flooded in through shell holes in the hall, which had become home to a pigeon. The projectors were on the point of collapse, as was the projectionist, an old man known locally as Doubles for his constant tipping. The first few days were spent coaxing the pigeon out of the rafters, covering the shell holes and finding someone else to run the projectors. They had hardly got the cinema running when a freak blizzard cut off the electricity for the last two days of their stay. Not even the region's army commander, General Atif Dudakovic (favourite film: *Withering Heights*), could get the lights back on. Instead he took advantage of the break to persuade Mr Filipovic to make a film about his unit's wartime exploits focusing on a daring action in 1994, in which he fooled the Serbs into thinking a mutiny was brewing in the Bosnian army. According to the general, the operation was inspired by the film thriller, *The Eagle Has Landed*. On the rest of the tour, in Zenica, Tuzla and Sarajevo the cinemas were in better shape, but there was a more

fundamental problem. Even though entrance was free, it proved hard to persuade Bosnia's war veterans and their families to leave home to spend an evening at the cinema. The war has left many soldiers too nervous and restless to sit still in a darkened hall for hours on end. Mr Filipovic also found that most of his friends and peers had left. "They took with them in their luggage the culture of going to the cinema," he said. The war, Mr Filipovic argued, boosted videos and television but virtually killed the cinema. While Bosnian cities were being shelled, their inhabitants covered at home. A huge industry in pirated video films grew up, which will be hard to regulate. Most important, Sarajevo has become a city of rural refugees, who have brought with them village customs and priorities. "It is a different city," said Mr Filipovic, who is reconsidering a decision to return home. But for all the gloom the festival organisers are convinced that Bosnia's pre-war passion for the cinema is showing signs of returning. As the festival draws to a close today, a hard core of about 100 filmmakers has emerged, including a group of film students that maintained their obsession for four years without facilities or equipment. "Even in Bihac, there were signs that the local cinema was coming back to life. The day we left, they were putting up posters for another film," Mr Baker-Monteyes said. "So despite all the problems, it did at least have a tangible result."

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At last, a streak of sanity
But nothing can excuse the great beef bungle

THE DISGRACEFUL mishandling of the beef crisis profoundly underlines the Conservative Party's inability to govern in the national interest. Faced with the original disturbing medical advice about the effects of BSE on humans, the Government took prompt but inadequate action on March 20. There were many reasons for that, among them over-reliance on imprecise expert advice, reluctance to appreciate the extent of the problem, unwillingness to offend vested interests and a failure to draw up a comprehensive strategy. But at the end of the day the Government's action was unconvincing. The result was the collapse of confidence in the domestic beef market and a rapid panic about eating British beef, both here and abroad (and not merely in Europe), from which we have not yet emerged.

It is easy to be wise after the event about the Government's errors in those first crucial days. Even if one accepts that it did the best it could the first time round, the fact remains that the solutions to the difficulties which quickly followed lay in the Government's own hands. First, the Government should have promptly reconsidered the actions it took on March 20, whereas in the event it did too little too late. Second, it should have acted far more urgently to secure European Union support for its strategy, pre-empting the possibility that Europe would become an impediment to a solution, as in the event it has now become.

Other children have rights too
A 13-year-old's hard lesson in life and social responsibility

GLAISDALE school teachers in Nottingham should not abandon their high ground. They have serious reasons for refusing to teach Richard Wilding, the 13-year-old disruptive pupil. These have been dispassionately set out by their spokesmen: 30 disruptive incidents by the boy over five months, threats to teachers as well as pupils, four earlier suspensions which still failed to improve his behaviour. Wilding's expulsion from the school had the support of the headteacher, the school governors, and the local education authority but was overturned by an independent appeal panel. Like their fellow professionals, Glaisdale's teachers have other reasons for their frustrations: larger classes, less support, less money to pay for extra staffing costs disruptive children need. So why waste the widespread public support for their cause by calling a strike on Friday and penalising all 600 children at the school?

Education reformers are rightly concerned by the threefold increase in excluded pupils over a three year period. Richard's is not a lonely case. There are 12,000 a year. Only a small proportion return to mainstream schooling. The lucky ones are admitted to PRUs (pupil referral units), but home tutoring takes nine months to organise and then only amounts to one hour a day. But disruptive children are not the only ones with rights; the undisciplined have their rights too. Children who want to learn have a right to have their classes undisturbed. What is missing in the current row is any indication from Richard's mother that her son had done anything wrong. There is an eagerness to cite the Children Act and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, but not even a hint that the complaints from a succession of teachers have any substance. Mrs Wilding complains that her son is now being held in "almost solitary confinement": taught separately from other pupils, given separate break-times, even escorted to the lavatory. This is hardly surprising given the disruption which her son has caused. Under last night's agreement his education will now be spread between his school, his home and a local PRU. It is not a good way of educating anyone but it just might provide Richard with an important lesson: social rights come tied to social responsibilities. If Richard wants to stay at Glaisdale, which he claims to, then he had better improve his behaviour.

Let them carry on busking
An old tradition must continue — up to certain standards

THE BUSKERS in the London underground lost a legal battle yesterday but may have won a victory. One of them failed to have his conviction overturned for "soliciting for reward" at Piccadilly underground station. He claimed, no one was actually asked for money: people were welcome to walk straight by. But learned argument prevailed: busking was deemed to be similar to soliciting on a street corner even if there is no explicit invitation. More hopefully London Transport now says that the authority is reviewing the bylaws to see whether a proper licensing scheme can be drawn up. This is a cheerful new tune but it could lead to discord. As a spokeswoman explained, "some buskers play very well and others do not." Who will license the licensers' taste? It is easier to say what is not permitted than what is allowed. Out goes the violinist who repeats the same 18 bars from the Four Seasons.

Out goes the Four Seasons in any form, preferably with a £5 on-the-spot fine. The guitarist who has learnt the chords of only one song is banned. So is anyone playing to an accompaniment tape. The music should be interesting enough to lighten our step. Above all, it should be played well. Busking has always been part of urban life, though the location has shifted. In Mayhem's London, it consisted of "going into public houses and playing and singing and dancing." Strolling performers have acted in marketplaces from Italy to China — and on Victorian beaches too. The tube buskers are there largely because they have been driven underground: the same happened to the Parisian "metro musicians". Nor should we copy Singapore, which tolerates busking so long as the performers only derive a non-existent or "psychic" income. Music need not always be its own reward.



Letters to the Editor
The despair of care

LINDA Grant has experienced a tragedy I witness each day of my working life (Mother we hardly know you, April 22). I help to care for 12 elderly, mentally confused people in a local authority home. We strive to maintain the dignity and privacy of such people throughout a bizarre and debilitating illness, whilst trying to support family members who are often wracked with guilt because "putting them in a home" has become an emotional last straw.

At our home we have a team of 10 plus four night care staff who, by a system of shifts, provide 24-hour care seven days a week. I cannot imagine how any family could cope with the sort of difficulties that arise daily, in an ordinary family setting, emotionally or physically.

My belief is that none of those I care for would, should they have glimpsed their future, want their children or grandchildren to perform such tasks as are routine to those who care for them. Lynne McCarthy, Kirkstall, Grigg Road, Newbridge, Gwent NP23 5FS.

point a healthcare proxy to make decisions about future treatment is something the Alzheimer's Disease Society and many carers would welcome. The Government has put these proposals on ice. Meanwhile, there are 650,000 people in the UK living with dementia and their carers are left to make choices about care in increasingly difficult circumstances. Clive Evers, Director of Information, Alzheimer's Disease Society, Gordon House, 10 Greencroft Place, London SW1P 1PE.

FAMILY relationships are immensely variable and it is as unwise to assume that all old people who become ill want to remain in their own homes as it is to assume that all daughters, or sons for that matter, are willing to make the huge sacrifices which caring often involves. We need a partnership between families and the state so that we can continue to build on the goodwill of families while protecting them from exploitation. Above all, we must ensure that families are properly informed about what taking on caring responsibilities may mean and that, if they choose to do so, the rest of society recognises and values their contribution. Jill Pitkeathley, Chief Executive, Carers' National Association, Ruth Pitter House, 20/25 Glasshouse Yard, London EC1A 4JS.

LINDA Grant's mother sounds typical of that generation — the stay-at-home mums who combined raising children and caring for elderly relatives and neighbours with underpinning a much wider network of community support services. In my childhood, it was my mother and women like her who cooked for pensioners' luncheon clubs, made home visits to the elderly and infirm, sewed the costumes for the drama group's concert parties, started "talking newspapers" for the blind, staffed the charity shops and dispensed the tea, cakes and sympathy from WRVS refreshment stands at local hospitals. Where are their heirs to public service? In my case, 300 miles away and preoccupied with a job. Women must have the right to work, and to properly paid work. But we also need to consider the vacuum which will be left when all the Mrs Grants are gone and our society discovers just how much work non-working women undertook on our behalf. Pam Beiddard, 31 Clyde Road, Totterdown, Bristol BS4 3DE.

Letters to the Editor
The wild wilding

RICHARD Wilding is the subject of a "statement of special educational needs", the result of prolonged inappropriate and unacceptable school behaviour. Only a modification to his behaviour patterns will lead to acceptance by his teachers and peers. Such modification will be helped by suitable rewards for positive changes. You do him no favours, therefore, by publishing a striking front-page photograph (April 22) of the publicity which will only serve to show him that his violence is productive. Dennis Ruston, 7 High Street, Horbling, Lincs NG34 0PE.

WHAT most teachers need is your unequivocal support in questioning the utter waste of resources, time and money on cases like this. What we don't need is splashy pictures of people who manipulate an already stretched system to its limits while blaming the system rather than themselves for the havoc they cause. If mainstream education, which surely must aim to do the best for as many pupils as possible, is underfunded, and the teachers stressed out and exhausted, this is why. Wouldn't recognition of some sense of personal responsibility from child and parents alike be a start? K A Nilsson, 40 Kings Avenue, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0JA.

THIS "disruptive" school-boy lives "among the rows of red-brick and concrete-clad semis of the Blisborough estate". Had he lived in a posh Surrey suburb and attended a private school, would he not now, cap awry and socks at half mast, be a hero of books, radio and television scripts entitled Just Richard? R E Harris, 294 Telegraph Road, Hestwall, Wirral L69 7BQ.

Letters to the Editor
Cold porridge and hot news

SURELY the 1996 riots in our prison system were caused precisely because of the presence of televisions in the cells (Leader, April 22)? The day before the roof went up in Strangeways the prisoners had been watching the news of the violence in the poll-tax riots of Trafalgar Square. Prisons were even waving a No Poll Tax Here banner the next day. By the end of that week almost every prison in England had gone up; a move which could only have grown through publicity. The media hate the idea that they are responsible for anything at all. But if the governor of Strangeways had knocked off the televisions there the day before the Trafalgar Square riots, his prison and indeed the whole system would have stayed intact. Michael Howard is right for a change. The should knock off the whole lot immediately. Tom Davies, 10 Westbourne Road, Penarth, South Glamorgan CF64 3HE.

views consistent with the abdication of societal responsibility towards children. Children are tolerated in public under duress, and have no inherent right to an adequate standard of living. Yet, hypocritically, Lilley and Brown expect children to grow up to demonstrate a responsible attitude towards society. The onus of care in respect of children is not solely the province of parents. M J Lebacqz, 31 Moorfields, Willaston, Cheshire CW5 6QY.

Please include a full postal address and a telephone number. We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not used.

Letters to the Editor
A Country Diary

TAMAR VALLEY. Mild wet Atlantic weather is re-established. Bluebell leaves crowd around the pale primroses and starry celandines which have dominated hedgebanks and, on the occasional dry day, cloud shadows run across brightening green grass and darkened, warming earth of ploughed fields. Beside Cargreen, within view of brilliant daffodil tass and sough beneath foaming white clouds in vivid blue sky. Here are trumpets, double, cup and jonquill types, with varying colours and forms; white petals around an intense pink cup (Penkive); double flamin Spaniards; Jim; Jim and Lime with reverse lemon petals and whitish trumpet and flame-centred Boslowick with flattened, split corona. In another section are all white daffodils including Tamar Snow and a wide row of St Dilpe with prolific white flowers and creamy buds. Almost one thousand varieties of daffodils are grown in this small field in blocks and rows, all named or numbered.

They come from breeders all over the world but about one hundred have been named by Dan du Plessis and his family and these are grouped in a splendid bed beside his house. Now retired from daffodil growing and supplying bulbs worldwide, Dan still maintains and extends his collection and, this year, a fragrant jonquill type with yellow petals and orange and green centre will take his name. Today he selects and picks near-perfect blooms for entry into the Daffodil Society's annual show. He knows the form and face of every variety and awaits with anticipation the emergence of new flowers which take about five years from seed. Alongside his exotic collection remnants of daffodil stands, once widely cultivated for market, survive in a bank. Clumps of dainty Brilliance, white Horace with pleasant eye centre and sturdy Cressus are at their best but Scilly Whites, Firsts and Sir Watkins are fading in the warmer weather. VIRGINIA SPIERS

Letters to the Editor
Another way to disarm Hizbullah

IF Israel's prime minister, Shimon Peres, embarked on Operation Grapes of Wrath in order to promote his tough-guy image during an election year in Israel, he has also contributed to the election campaign of Hizbullah in Lebanon's forthcoming parliamentary elections (Syrian leader raises price of ceasefire, April 23). Israel is now prepared to reach another version of the 1983 understanding with Hizbullah but this time elevating it to a written agreement, thus granting Hizbullah near-state status. If this was not Israel's initial objective, we must recognise that Operation Grapes of Wrath was a tragic flop. According to the logic governing the present diplomatic process, Syria has also to be a signatory to the agreement along with Hizbullah, at the insistence of Israel. The reason given is that Syria is a major power in the area, controls decisions in Lebanon, and is the real force, along with Iran, behind Hizbullah. If

Israel's claim that Syria uses the Hizbullah card to fine-tune the security situation in line with its interests is true, then signing an agreement with Syria and Hizbullah, to the exclusion of Lebanon, is an indication to both Syria and Hizbullah that playing such a card will remain effective in the future. The international priority seems to be to save prime minister Peres from the mess he has put himself into and find a face-saving formula before the Israeli elections. What should be the priority is to save the real victim, Lebanon, from the brutal clumsiness of its southern neighbour and to find a long-term solution which would restore its authority over its occupied territory. Hizbullah would then be disarmed and remain as a political party in Lebanon's parliament. Nadim Shehadi, Director, Centre for Lebanese Studies, 59 Observatory Street, Oxford OX2 6EP.

Letters to the Editor
Browned off on child benefit

GORDON Brown's article (Strife begins at 16, April 22) illustrates the difficulty Labour has in using its membership to endorse policy rather than formulate it. Many party members are committed supporters of life-long learning — but we wait in vain for invitations to comment. Defensive reaction to Tory failures, whether grant-maintained schools, nursery vouchers or the return of the eleven-plus, is allowing the enemy to choose the battlefield. Terry Hamilton, 23 Cavendish Crescent South, The Park, Nottingham, NG7 1ED.

WHAT have Peter Lilley and Gordon Brown in common? They both manifest

صكنا من الامل

Hardly Ab Fab at Sears, page 12
Plus: Kohl's bungalow summit

Tomorrow: The loD slant on Europe

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
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Finance Guardian

Forte in £1bn fight back

Sir Rocco nears new funds deal

Patrick Donovan
City Editor

SIR ROCCO Forte is close to securing up to £1 billion worth of City backing to help fund a bid for part of the hotel business he lost when Granada took over his family-controlled leisure empire earlier this year.

Investment banks, together with venture capital firms such as the Prudential and Citicorp. An agreement is expected to be finalised after a series of presentations to institutions over the next three weeks. Proposals are likely to include a pledge to float the portfolio hotels group on the stock market. City sources said a number of financial options are being considered, although Sir Rocco is expected to opt for a conventional "debt to equity combination".

The aim is to give Sir Rocco enough financial firepower to bid for at least parts of the expected auction by Granada of the 84-strong Meridian hotel chain and the 18 Exclusive hotels, which include famous names such as the Hyde Park Hotel, Grosvenor House and Brown's.

Some analysts estimate that they would be worth in excess of £2 billion. Sources close to Sir Rocco's unnamed new company insist that a funding package is expected soon. Advisers helping Sir Rocco include JP Morgan, Morgan Stanley, SBC Warburg, UBS and Cazenove.

Over the past few months, Granada has received the resignations of four key executives. These include Peter Smith, who headed up Travelodge, and Meridian hotels chief Randolph Guthrie, who quit just three weeks after his appointment. Little Chief chief

Steven Evans and the group's marketing director, Richard Carrick, have also handed in their notice. Granada is understood to have badly damaged morale of long-standing Forte managers because of its decision to raise prices at its hotels and roadside restaurants. Executives who know the businesses well feel this will hit Forte's sales, particularly in the mid-market hotel business which is particularly price-sensitive.

Notebook

Brown justified in seeing red



Edited by Alex Brummer

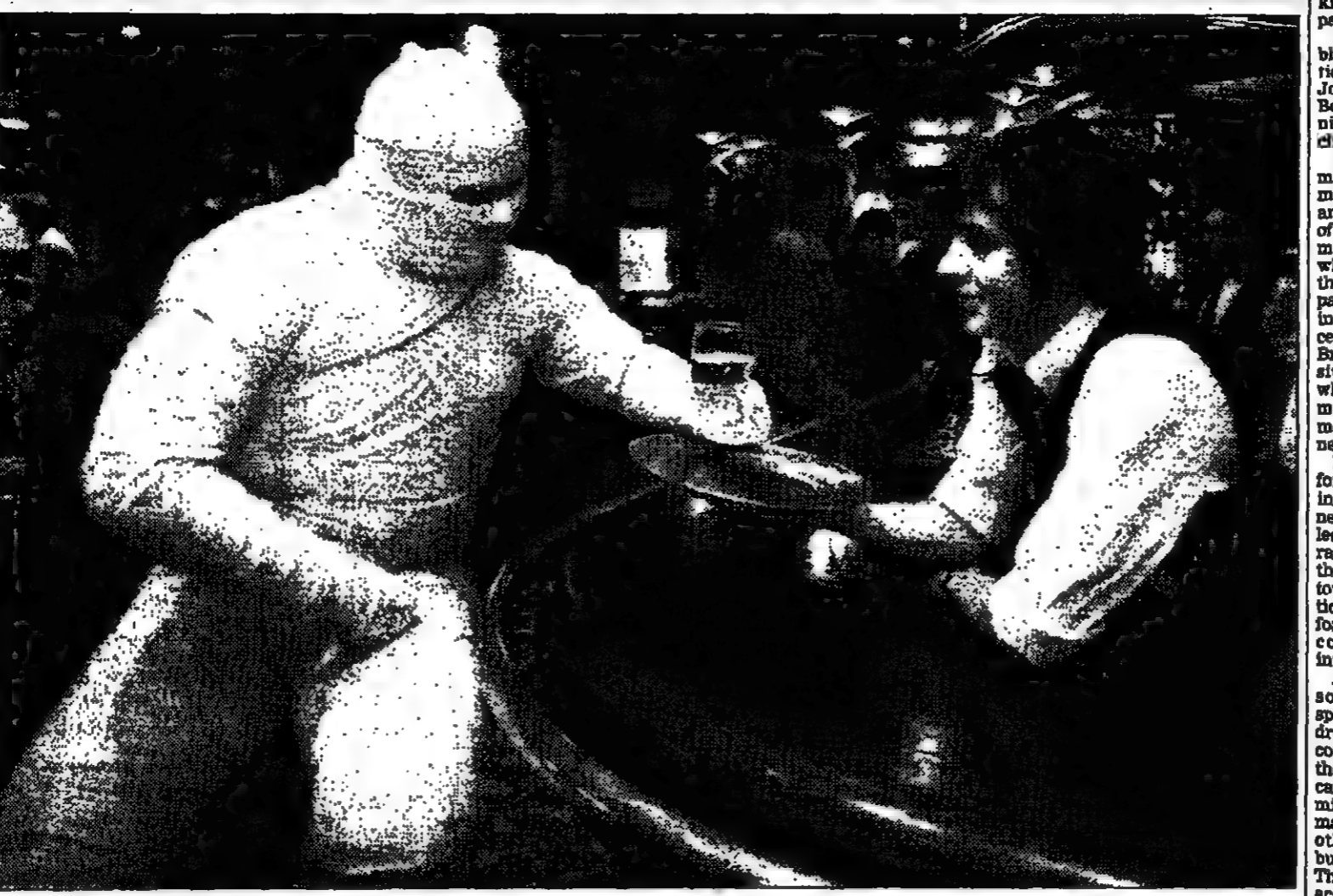
IT IS understandable that Gordon Brown is angry at the considerable tax avoidance industry which is seeking to drum up business on the back of the assumption that new Labour will be kinder to the wealthier taxpayer than the Tories.

moving away from Rentokil, following M & G's pledge to back BET last week, and continued to do so again yesterday, when three more BET shareholders pledged their support, including the Prudential.

Satellite firm to launch in Latin America

Ian King

FLEXTECH, the fast-growing British cable and satellite TV programmer, yesterday announced a tie-up with media groups Sony and Time Warner to launch a satellite TV channel for Latin America.



We don't get many mummies in here... At these prices, I'm not surprised. £50 for half a pint? I don't care if Scottish and Newcastle has produced just 1,000 bottles based on Tutankhamun's original recipe - nobody fails for pyramid selling any more. PHOTOGRAPH: NOEL DOBSON

BET cites main investor loyalty to thwart bid

Ian King

BET, the services group fighting a hostile £2.1 billion bid from rival Rentokil, yesterday pledged three more leading shareholders in an attempt to convince the City that opinion was moving in its favour.

programme. BET said the pledges meant that four out of its seven biggest shareholders had now agreed to support it, representing some 17.25 per cent.

executive Clive Thompson poured scorn on BET's latest announcement and insisted he was still on course for victory.

Regulator dents BT's plan for £33bn merger

Andrew Higgins
sees Hong Kong merger target lose overseas calls monopoly

HONGKONG Telecom, the prize Cable & Wireless asset at the heart of British Telecom's £33 billion merger hopes, yesterday lost a monopoly grip on the colony's fastest-growing international services but escaped with the core of its hugely profitable

Stanley Asia. "This is not a deal-breaker for BT. It could have been much worse."

Export struggle

THE UK economy is reverting to type. After four years of distinctly un-British recovery, based on strong exports and a booming manufacturing sector, industrial firms are finally running out of steam - and the consumer is picking up the baton.

However, there is one dangerous element in the advice currently available - the encouragement to shift funds offshore to Guernsey, Jersey, Luxembourg and other such investment havens.

Organised crime finds hiding place for loot on Internet

Das Atkinson in Lisbon

FRAUDSTERS and money launderers are colonising the Internet in an attempt to escape the surveillance of police and regulators around the world, a conference was told yesterday.

company on the Internet supposedly supplying information services; in fact, it will act as a clearing house for tainted funds. Dr Backhouse was speaking to delegates from police, judiciaries and law firms around the world at the International conference on money laundering and economic crime held in Lisbon.

house, over more goods and services are being offered for sale on the Internet and priced in e-cash. Because of this the money need never return to the conventional banking system. In addition, new currencies created on the Internet will exist independent of central banks.

fraud squad officer said security and intelligence officers in the US had found themselves with time on their hands after the end of the Cold War and were now focusing on the underworld.

Exhibitions group directors share £1m severance pay

Patrick Donovan
City Editor

THREE departing directors of the Blenheim exhibition's group shared nearly £1 million worth of severance pay, according to the company's annual report.

to December 1995. It is attempting to put behind it three troubled years of financial problems. The payoffs comes just a year after the group disclosed that it had paid £540,000 in compensation to Philip Soar, its former chief executive, together with two other directors. City Confidence in Blenheim was badly dented last year by the posting of four profit warnings amid signs of a collapse in its key exhibition market.

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Austria 15.51	Germany 2.2200	Malta 0.5350	South Africa 6.50
Belgium 45.50	Greece 357.25	Netherlands 2.4875	Spain 184.50
Canada 2.0075	Hong Kong 17.48	New Zealand 2.1450	Sweden 9.9750
Cyprus 0.7040	India 51.85	Norway 5.61	Switzerland 175
Denmark 6.61	Ireland 0.4000	Portugal 228.75	Turkey 10.7521
Finland 7.16	Israel 4.80	Saudi Arabia 5.04	USA 1.4750

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12 FINANCE AND ECONOMICS

Iran bill sparks fears of 'extra-territorial' bullying US sanction plans threaten UK firms

Ian Black
Diplomatic Editor

BRITISH firms stand to lose millions of pounds of business if, as expected, the United States passes controversial legislation imposing sanctions on non-American companies trading with Iran's oil industry.

Concern is mounting on both sides of the Atlantic that the issue, already discussed several times between Prime Minister John Major and President Bill Clinton, will create a damaging public row if the bill passes into law.

Under the proposed legislation, drawn up as part of a wide-ranging effort to isolate Iran, non-US companies involved in Iran's gas and oil sector could have their operations in the US prohibited and find themselves excluded from US government contracts.

According to figures compiled by the Department of Trade and Industry, of the £330m of British exports to Iran last year, half went to the oil and gas sector while the London office of the National Iranian Oil Company spends around £40m annually in Britain.

Most British companies selling pumps, valves and connectors to Iran also sell to

the US and now face a stark choice between the two markets.

Foreign Office officials are also arguing that the measures, expected to become law next month, are unlikely to affect Iran in the short and medium term, and that the main result will be to penalise British firms and encourage a black market in parts and spares.

But Britain's concern is less about the relatively small sums of money involved and more about the extension of the principle of "extra-territoriality" — when a government imposes sanctions because it objects to something outside its jurisdiction.

Britain, which is the US's largest trading partner in the European Union, is also worried about the growing tendency for delicate issues of international trade and foreign policy to be driven by a domestic political agenda.

The Iran bill was introduced last year by Senator Alfonse D'Amato of New York and was watered down, but an even tougher version has just emerged from the House International Relations Committee. Separate moves are being proposed against non-US firms investing in Libya. Similar unilateral US measures imposed against Cuba have already drawn strong protests from Britain and its

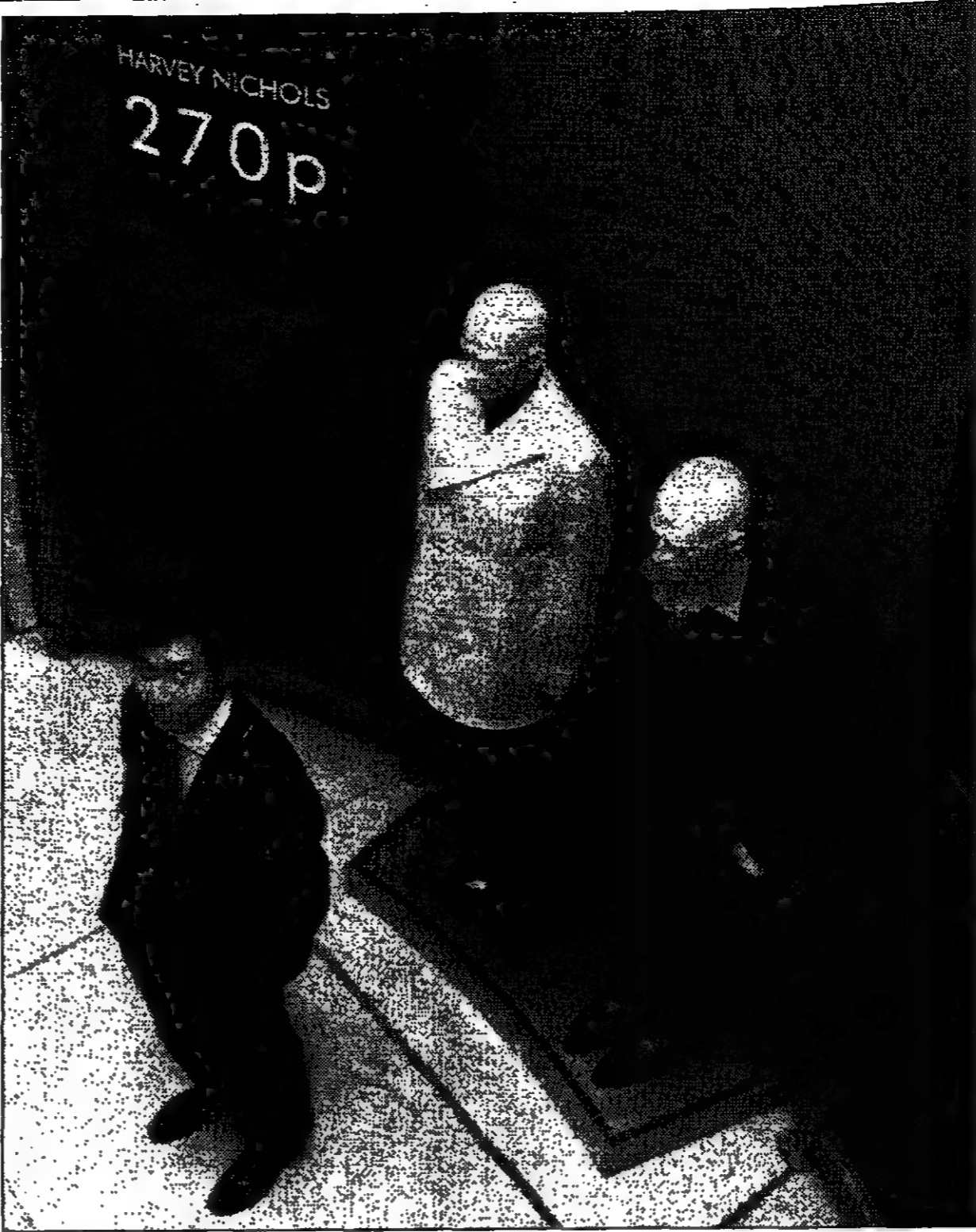
European Union partners. Intense lobbying against the Iran sanctions has failed to make any headway in Washington; the British ambassador, Sir John Kerr, has been writing to individual congressmen while efforts are being made to find a united position within the EU.

The US insists that any legislation could not be in breach of World Trade Organisation rules because the proposed action is determined by "essential security interests" and would thus be hard for other member states to oppose.

President Clinton announced last May that he was banning all trade between US companies and Iran. After the embargo took effect, US oil companies halted purchases of Iranian crude amounting to about \$4 billion a year.

For US policymakers, Iran is probably one of the two most dangerous regimes on earth — the other being Libya. US officials accuse Iran of:

- engaging in a "crash programme" to develop nuclear weapons with technology imported from Russia and China;
- seeking to sabotage the Middle East peace process;
- menacing its neighbours;
- committing serious human rights abuses.



Harvey Nicks sale — shares must go

Ian King

HARVEY Nichols — the London department store frequented by, among others, the Princess of Wales and the fictional Patsy and Edna of TV's Absolutely Fabulous — will be valued at almost £150 million when shares in the business start trading on Friday.

Shares of Harvey Nichols, which is owned by Hong Kong luxury goods company Dickson Concepts, are being placed with City institutions at 270p each. The shares are being priced at the top end of City expectations, reflecting high demand for the issue, which was 15 times oversubscribed.

The valuation also represents a handsome profit for Dickson, which is retaining a 50.1 per cent stake in Harvey Nichols, and which bought the then loss-making store from Burton, the clothes retailer, in 1991 for £51 million.

Babcock claims Saudi dissident cost £200m

Tony May

THE engineering combine Babcock International yesterday claimed it had lost £200 million of Saudi orders over the al-Mas'ari affair, saving profits to a mere £5 million.

John Parker, Babcock's chairman, said that like other UK process engineering companies it had lost contracts — mainly to US and Japanese firms — because of the continuing fight over the fate of the leading Saudi dissident, Mohammed al-Mas'ari who has been running a political campaign against Saudi rulers from Britain.

His successful court appeal earlier this month against deportation irritated the UK government and the Saudi regime.

Mr Parker said: "As far as I know no British process contractor has won a job down there in six

months." The Department of Trade and Industry said: "The Saudis have given us an assurance that there is no discrimination against British companies on political grounds." It urged companies with a problem to produce proof in court.

Firms including Davy, John Brown Engineering and Babcock, claimed last week that the authorities in Riyadh had withdrawn their favoured contractor status on some projects, and eliminated them from the bidding process on others. The shares of British Aerospace yesterday fell 14p to 864p as concern grew that its mammoth al-Yamamah arms deal — worth £2 billion a year — might be affected by the tension.

Mr Parker said "lost" Saudi orders involved process-plant contracting in the petrochemicals industry. Saudi Arabia normally accounts for the bulk of Babcock's sales in the

Middle East. He said the company had been establishing new markets in Yemen, Syria, and Pakistan, to offset lost business in Saudi Arabia.

Mr Parker added that the group had also faced problems in Germany, where they had been reorganising for two years, cutting staff by 40 per cent and reducing sites from two to six. "The savagery of the surgery was pretty awful," he said.

In a warning issued to the Stock Exchange, Babcock said that group profits would be "significantly below" market forecasts in the second half of 1995-96. After an £18 million operational loss, offset by a £21 million exceptional gain, profits will reach only £3 million for the year to March 31.

The news sent the group's shares down to a five-year low of 108p at one point. They later rallied and ended the day off 18½p at 112p.

Strong arms may not be quite enough to steer Sears out of troubled waters

OUTLOOK/ ROGER COWE doubts if Sir Bob Reid's deck-clearing will put retailer on the right course

FOR Sir Bob Reid, once of Shell and British Rail, now chairman of Sears, 1995 was a year of "clearing the decks for action", so he could accept yesterday that the reported pre-tax loss of £190 million could be described as a bloodbath. But he promised that Sears was going to be "a real force in retailing in the UK".

The trouble is that Sears has once a real force in UK retailing but now seems to be less so by the year.

And the question is whether the deck-clearing will finally be followed by full speed ahead after years of poor navigation, or whether management will continue to spend its time desperately trying to plug holes below the waterline.

The signs are not good. For years, Sears has been out on strategy and poor on execution, and that does not seem to have changed with the arrival of Liam Strong as chief executive from British Airways in 1992.

Mr Strong's marketing background seems to have resulted in sharper strategic thinking, but every year brings some new operational problem and his preferred solution seems to be to chop off the offending limb. That approach has a long tradition at Sears, which has sold businesses as diverse as house-building and the William Hill

betting chain over the past 10 years.

Last year the cause of the huge loss was an exceptional charge of £220 million stemming from the sale of famous shoe shops such as Szozona and Freeman Hardy Willis, plus the Olympus sports shop chain and Millets.

But ignoring those losses, the basic trading of the group was poor, even with the benefit of a 68rd week of trading. Only Adams childrenswear and the Selfridges department store increased profits. The upheaval in shoes led to poor sales, lower profit margins and higher costs which added up to £31 million. Even the continuing brands saw profits dip from £29 million to £16 million, thanks mainly to a miserable time at Dolcis.

Other divisions fared much better. But the Freeman's mail order business reported slightly lower sales, after taking out the extra week, and profits fell by £3 million — apparently because of poor recruitment of agents to take the catalogues. In womenswear, Miss Selfridge had a bad year because the products were too fashionable, producing a £7 million drop in profits which offset a better result from Wallis.

The trouble with retailing, as others such as House of Fraser have illustrated, is that it is very easy to buy the wrong products. Everybody

does it, even Marks & Spencer.

Good retailers make fewer such mistakes, and spot them more quickly. Great retailers can persuade people to buy the stuff anyway because they have built a hugely powerful brand. That way, customers are buying the name (such as M&S or Next) just as much as the clothing.

Mr Strong was recruited for his brand-building skills, now

retailing, through Selfridge department stores, Freeman's mail order and shops including Dolcis, Shoe City, Wallis, Richards and Adams.

Best divisions dip ... to continue a dismal record

Trading profit (£m)	Net loss/profit (£m)
Shoes	-123
Mail order	-188
Selfridges	
Adams	
Women's wear	

evidenced by the belated promotion of Selfridges in locations other than London. But it is rather more difficult to build a brand in the crowded High Street or retail park than it is in the air, where BA had a virtual monopoly. Sears' dominance of High Street shoe retailing was a little short of that, though still substantial, but that dominance seems to have been dispensed.

The new formats, Shoe Express and Shoe City, are growing fast, and it has long been recognised that Sears would do better with far fewer formats, but surely it wasn't necessary to abandon virtually everything else so expensively?

Retail analyst John Richards of NatWest Markets applied Sir Bob Reid's nautical analogy: "The boat has been sailing in rough seas and they have been throwing lots of stuff overboard to stay afloat. They are clearly sailing into less troubled waters but there is still a credibility problem as to whether they have the right captain."

Mr Strong said yesterday the year had begun badly in mail order and there would be little good news in the first six months. Pretty soon after that he will have to demonstrate that Sears has more skill at retailing than metaphors, or he is likely to walk the plank.

News in brief

1.4m on line for Railtrack shares

MORE THAN 1.4 million people are reported to have registered with the 110 share shops around the country with the intention of cashing in on the Railtrack share offer. City sources said that the response to the share offer, registration for which closes next Monday, had been good and that a final surge was expected before the close.

Those registering will be able to choose either an instalment discount or bonus shares. The instalment discount is 15p off the price of each share purchased in the UK public offer. As an alternative, those registering can choose bonus shares. They will receive one free share for every 15 purchased and held continuously until May 31, 1999. — Keith Harper

Pru silent over Friends bid

PRUDENTIAL, the UK's largest life insurer, yesterday declined to comment on reports that it had made an offer to buy mutual life group Friends Provident. Prudential is understood to be keen to acquire a mutual, but analysts have also linked it to several other candidates, particularly Scottish Widows.

Friends Provident, which is also understood to have caught the eye of both Sun Alliance and Abbey National, may make its future clearer after its annual general meeting being held today. Friends Provident, which has £15 billion in funds, is understood to have received a handful of bids in the region of £750 million to £1 billion. — Pauline Springer

New CAA chairman named

SIR Malcolm Field, former head of WH Smith, the books and periodicals chain, was yesterday appointed chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority in succession to Sir Christopher Chataway, who stands down at the end of the month. Sir Malcolm's family's wholesale newspaper business was taken over by WH Smith in 1982.

He comes to the CAA at a time when it is handling 12 per cent more flights than in 1993, while average flight delays have fallen by 8 per cent over the same period. — Keith Harper

Lower bill for Equitas

LLOYD'S of London has sharply cut its estimates of the cost of setting up Equitas, the company planned to take over the loss-stricken insurance market's old liabilities. Revised figures sent to syndicates show the total cost to Names should be much lower than the £1.6 billion originally predicted by Lloyd's. The Department of Trade and Industry recently put the cost at £1.5 billion.

The Names will have to pay a premium to reinsure their individual old liabilities into Equitas. Market sources said the new premium forecasts have been reduced from "frightening" sums to "almost nothing" for some Names. — Pauline Springer

Tunnel deepens Stena losses

STENA, the world's largest international ferry company, lost more in the first quarter this year than in the same period in 1995 because of strong competition from Eurotunnel. The company's pre-tax loss deepened to 504 million kronor (£33 million) from 408 million kronor. — Bloomberg

Biondi's the new star for Seagram's MCA studio

Mark Tran in New York

MCA, the Hollywood studio acquired last year by drinks giant Seagram, yesterday ended its long search for a chief executive by appointing top entertainment executive Frank Biondi.

Mr Biondi, admired on Wall Street for his financial and deal-making skills, was fired as chief executive of Viacom, the parent company of Paramount Communications, in January.

Viacom chairman Sumner Redstone sacked his right-hand man after complaining about his lack of aggressiveness.

MCA has been looking for a proven entertainment executive since the legendary Lew Wasserman stepped aside after the Hollywood studio was bought by Seagram from Japan's Matsushita Electric Industrial last summer for \$5.7 billion.

Seagram chief executive officer Edgar Bronfman has been under intense scrutiny as he assembles his top team to revive MCA, which had become too dependent on film director Steven Spielberg.

The director has moved on to form his own studio, DreamWorks, with former Walt Disney film studio chief Jeffrey Katzenberg, and records mogul David Geffen.

In luring Mr Biondi to MCA, Mr Bronfman will have further enhanced his credibility as a media magnate.

The appointment follows that of Ron Meyer as MCA president and chief operating officer. Mr Meyer was president of Creative Artists Agency, Hollywood's leading talent agency. Although he has good contacts with directors and actors, Mr Bronfman was looking for someone with more business acumen to guide MCA as it competes against other entertainment giants such as Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. Time Warner and Viacom.

Labour offers limited defence on union rights

WORKFACE/ Censure of UK law may not cease under a Blair government, says SEUMAS MILNE

THE British government is in the international dock again over its trade union legislation. This time, it has been taken to task by the International Labour Organisation — the United Nations body responsible for employment affairs — for a 1993 law allowing employers to discriminate against trade union members over pay and conditions.

It is possible that a Labour government could follow in its footsteps as Labour has made clear that it will not be repealing the bulk of the anti-union legislation.

According to the Geneva-based ILO's Committee of Experts, the provision — passed in the House of Lords after the Court of Appeal found against an attempt by the Daily Mail to penalise journalists — breaks its convention 88 on freedom of association. Britain, the ILO insists, should change the law to protect workers from being penalised "for attempting

to regulate their terms and conditions of employment through collective bargaining".

The Government has been damned repeatedly by the ILO: for banning spies at the GCHQ electronic spy centre; for outlawing all forms of solidarity and "secondary" action; for denying unions the right to sanction their own members for strikebreaking; and for allowing employers to sack strikers.

Despite being a signatory to the ILO conventions, the Government has made clear its disdain for such declarations by tightening trade union controls still further after each complaint — and been denounced by Labour.

The party has yet to settle its policies on union and employee rights but leader Tony Blair has promised to sign up to the Social Chapter, restore union rights at GCHQ; extend basic employment rights to all workers from day one; end unions' obligation to re-ballot mem-

bers every three years on automatic "check-off" subscriptions; and, most significantly, introduce a legal right to union recognition where more than half a workforce want it.

This is all music to union ears. But the likelihood is

that it will go no further. That means not just continued ballots, picketing controls and sequestration of union funds, but that the full panoply of restrictions on the right to take industrial action — some employ-

ment law experts argue it is now almost impossible to hold a legal strike — will remain on the statute book. And these are exactly the areas where the ILO has already crossed swords with the Government.

With the threat that any

Hights — a think tank sponsored by those same unions — will put the finishing touches to a comprehensive framework of union and employment rights, in line with ILO conventions, which effectively lays down a challenge to Labour's minimalist approach.

Among the ILO rights the IER wants enshrined in law is the right to take secondary and sympathy action and to strike to promote "professional, social or economic interests".

Michael Meacher, Labour's employment spokesman, is alarmed at the prospect of any argument with the ILO and insists a Labour government would be "very concerned" to adhere to the conventions. This is international law after all. Any decent-minded government should adhere to them. There would have to be exceptional circumstances why that should not be so.

Michael Meacher

صکفا من الاله

Racing

Champion jockey expects bold showing from 1,000 Guineas outsider. Ron Cox reports

Dettori chooses Maid For The Hills

ANOTHER piece in the classic jigsaw slotted into place yesterday when Frankie Dettori was booked to ride Maid For The Hills for David Loder in the Pertemps 1,000 Guineas on Sunday week.

Stable companion to Blue Duster, pulled out of the Guineas because of a muscle problem, Maid For The Hills stayed on to finish fifth behind Thrilling Day in the Shadwell Stud Nell Gwyn Stakes at last week's Craven Meeting.

"I've never ridden her before on the track and she's beaten me a few times," said Dettori, who had two winners at Pontefract yesterday.

"I've ridden her to work a few times and she runs a nice race in the Nell Gwyn. There's an odds-on chance to beat so we'll be hoping for second place."

Maid For The Hills was trained to 40-1 from 66-1 by Ladbrokes as a result of the booking of Dettori. Perhaps of greater significance is the fact that Sheikh Mohammed's first jockey, returning the Godolphin runner Bint Shadayid, in the 1,000 Guineas.

Dettori carried the Godolphin colours into third place on Monday in last year's Eider Classic. But, although he will ride Mark of Esteem for the Sheikh's Dubai-based operation in the 2,000 Guineas, Richard Hills is expected to partner Bint Shadayid.

Trained by John Dunlop last season when she won twice and chased home Boats at Shorn in the Fillies Mile at Ascot, Bint Shadayid reportedly failed to shine in her last piece of serious work in Dubai.

This would appear to be a reflection of the riding arrangements, although Bint Shadayid may be the type to reserve her best for the track



Smart winner... Smart Guest, second right, proves too good for his rivals in yesterday's Bentley Selling Stakes at Pontefract. PHOTO MICHAEL STEELE

and work-outs on the sand, however searching, could be misleading.

Credible alternatives to Boers Sham, the 6-2 on favourite, are certainly thin on the ground. A possible danger disappeared when Crispie Beal decided to renege a Vote Sante to the French 1,000 Guineas.

Henry Cecil would appear to have things sewn up with Boers Sham and there is growing confidence behind his 2,000 Guineas candidate, Storm Trooper, who was backed from 11-1 to 10-1 with Hill's yesterday.

Silver Dome, one of Cecil's Derby entries and as low as 14-1 in some lists, will be an interesting runner in the Thresher Classic Trial at Sandown on Saturday. My information suggests Silver Dome has been overrated. Storm Trooper may yet emerge as Cecil's premier Derby horse, but waiting in the wings is Dushyantor.

This half-brother to Warnock and Commander in Chief has a touch of class, according to good judges in the Cecil yard. He has yet to show it on

the racecourse, but a Derby quote of 25-1 may not last much longer and should be taken before Dushyantor reappears, probably at the Guineas meeting.

For many, flat racing will take second place at Sandown on Saturday with the 40th running of the Whitbread Gold Cup. Hill's yesterday saw good support for Morcell,

run from 9-1 to 7-1, and Proud Sun, 10-1 to 10-14s.

Feathered Gale drifted slightly out to 11-2, but his trainer, Arthur Moore, and jockey, Francis Woods, continue in the form. They took the 500,000 BMW Chase at Funchestown yesterday with Klairon Davis, who gave weight and a 10 lengths beating to old rival Sound Man.

Sport and Law

Skiing officials agree to pay for Maier death

San Traynor in Bonn

THE trial of two senior international ski officials charged with "negligently killing" a former Austrian world champion was suddenly halted yesterday when a surprise out-of-court settlement was reached to pay the victim's daughter more than \$300,000 in compensation.

But in what threatened to be yet another benchmark verdict for sports authorities, the judge in the Munich court said that the two defendants appeared to be "marginally guilty" and that the trial would be resumed unless they paid the settlement in full by the end of next month.

The 26-year-old Ulrike Maier, a popular two-time super giant slalom world champion, died in January 1995 at a World Cup downhill in Garmisch-Partenkirchen in southern Germany. She broke her neck and died within hours after slipping and crashing into a thick pole near the end of the run.

Hubert Schweighofer, her partner and father of her six-year-old daughter Melanie, blamed the two International Skiing Federation officials in charge of the race, Kurt Hoch, 46, of Austria, and Jan Tschannauer, 46, of Switzerland.

Nine months after the death the Bavarian prosecution authorities halted their inquiries, deciding against pressing charges against the officials. But constant lobbying from Schweighofer and his legal team persuaded the prosecution to reopen the case.

His campaign came to a climax on Monday when the officials went before the Munich court charged with manslaughter because of the sitting of the timing pole, which narrowed the run by four yards. This, the prosecution alleged, made them responsible for the tragedy.

The two defendants vehemently denied their guilt when the trial opened on Monday. Maier was blaming the accident on the ever mounting pressures of Alpine skiing which drove competitors to over-cruise their equipment and risk the fatal. Maier was travelling along at 85mph when she crashed.

They told the court that the suspect timing post had been in place for four days before the accident and had prompted no protests. They added that in long careers in skiing they had never seen or heard of an accident of the type in which Maier died and that it could not have been prevented.

But the prosecution pinned the blame for the death squarely on the timing post and the fact that it was placed near the end of the run.

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Southwell (A.W.)

Racing results for Southwell (A.W.) including race numbers, names of horses, and jockeys.

Perth (N.H.)

Racing results for Perth (N.H.) including race numbers, names of horses, and jockeys.

Catterick card with guide to the form

Racing results for Catterick card with guide to the form including race numbers, names of horses, and jockeys.

Results

Racing results for Results including race numbers, names of horses, and jockeys.

Results

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enough waters

Advertisement for 'enough waters' featuring a large image of a person's face and text describing the product.

union rights

Advertisement for 'union rights' featuring a large image of a person's face and text describing the product.

ment. say SELMANS

Advertisement for 'ment. say SELMANS' featuring a large image of a person's face and text describing the product.

RACELINE advertisement with contact information and a grid of numbers.

Blithere for the first time - CATTERICK: 2.50 Abstone Agam. PERTH: 4.10 Steadfast Elita. SOUTHWELL: 2.00 Spencer's Revenge.

Ski death case ends out of court, page 13

Cruyff Mk II takes centre stage, page 14

Tyson warned off, page 15

Rugby brings Murdoch down to earth, page 15

Sports Guardian

Platt back as England put on their thinking caps

Report by David Lacey

TONIGHT England will get a better idea of how realistic their hopes of winning the European Championship are. Croatia were the most impressive qualifiers for the tournament and are the strongest opponents Terry Venables's team will encounter during the run-in to Euro '96.

Venables, therefore, cannot be faulted for lack of imagination in deciding, at this late stage, that it is about time England joined the mainstream of European football by playing three at the back with five in midfield. The intelligence was not wrong except that Wright will be flanked by two full-backs, Gary Neville and Pearce, rather than having another centre-back, Elnogu, alongside him.

David Platt, who has not played for England since last summer, gets an opportunity to show that, despite his indifferent form since a series of knee operations, he can still turn in a satisfactory international performance.

Platt will wear the captain's armband but is still in the way navy so far as the European Championship is concerned. He needs a convincing game tonight to prove to Venables that, come June, he can be anything more



Have ball, please score... Robbie Fowler gets the chance to prove his international credentials when he starts his first game for England tonight. FRANK BAFON

FIVE TO FEAR



Zvonimir Boban

Milan
Captain, wonderful striker of the ball in midfield. Milan discouraged Manchester United's interest in him this season, though they have yet to make him an automatic choice. Croatian nationalist hero since he kicked a Serb policeman during a 1990 match that degenerated into an ethnic scuffle.



Igor Stimac

Derby County
Strong tackler and header of the ball signed by Derby from Hajduk Split for £1.5 million in November. Plays as a sweeper for Derby but as a marking central defender for Croatia. Married to a former Miss Yugoslavia.



Davor Suker

Sevilla
Quick, clever, killer finisher with blazing left foot. Has scored at better than a goal a game for Croatia, including two in the 2-1 European Championship win over Italy in Palermo. Will join Real Madrid next season. Has been learning English in preparation for Euro '96.



Robert Prosinecki

Barcelona
Elegant midfielder who won a European Cup winners' medal with Red Star Belgrade in 1992. Was meant to be a superstar in the making when he joined Real Madrid that year but his two seasons there were highlighted by a series of injuries. Barcelona signed him last summer. Heavy smoker.



Alen Boksic

Lazio
Tall, strong striker, renowned dribbler, relentless header of defences. Hard work compensates in some measure for recent goal drought. Won European Cup with Marseille in 1993, then was sold for \$8 million to Lazio, where he has suffered a frustrating season.

Robert Pryce

than a volunteer reserve. For Robbie Fowler, starting an England match for the first time, the evening will be no less crucial. The 21-year-old Liverpool striker now has a

proper chance to show he can score goals against international defences. If he succeeds, Shearer and Ferdinand as well as injuries.

Above all else this will be an intelligence test for England. The system will only work if the players understand their roles, and it may not be entirely coincidental that three of the midfield positions are filled by footballers with Italian league experience — Platt, Ince and Gascoigne.

Yesterday Venables insisted that the formation was not revolutionary, just a logical progression. "I've been looking to change things over a period of time," he said. "This is a natural way of playing."

Of course England will not defend with only three players. Ince will be on hand to step back and help out, so will Stone and Platt, and Gascoigne, as he showed against Bulgaria, can fill a more disciplined role.

The essence of playing this way is that if players have both ability and adaptability a team is better able to switch from defence to attack with-

out exposing itself to opposition counter-attacks. As Platt explained yesterday: "The format will change as the game changes. We'll be starting with three defenders, but if the opposition start throwing men forward the back three will become a back four."

"At this level the tactical sub-battle is of greater importance. There has to be flexibility in the team and we've been progressing steadily towards this. Against Bulgaria, Southgate stepped up into midfield, this time Ince will be stepping back into defence. What we'll be doing against Croatia is not that new."

Indeed it is not. England teams habitually played with a centre-half flanked by two full-backs from the mid-Twenties to the early Sixties. What goes on in front of them, however, has altered beyond recognition.

Croatia might beat England tonight if Boban, Boksic, Suker and Prosinecki bypass Ince and leave Wright feeling that his first international for four years is even worse than his last, against Spain in Santander under Graham Taylor. But this will not be another Hungary, another 1983.

"Croatia are a good counter-attacking side," said Venables, "so we'll have to be

patient and not give the ball away. They'll do us some damage if we go at it a bit gung-ho." But if the night belongs to Fowler, England's supporters will be gung-hoing their way home all the same.

CROATIA: Ledic (Croatia Zagreb); Sisa (West Ham); Jukic (Real Oviedo); Stanec (Derby); Juracic (Preston); Anusevic (Sheff Wed); Stanec (Sheff Wed); Prosinecki (Barcelona); Jami (Real Betis); Suker (Sevilla); Bobak (Lazio).

Snail in ginger beer at root of rugby ruckus



Vincent Hanna

THE first thing we tell referees," says Steve Griffiths, "if it looks dangerous: stop it." Steve is referees' development officer for the Rugby Football Union and a careful man.

His aim is to ensure that, within five years, every rugby game, at whatever level, is controlled by a trained referee. To that end he supplies manuals, videos, information packs, training courses, appraisals, and assessments. Insurance is also available.

These things should reassure you that your son (or daughter) is as safe as possible when playing junior rugby. Ironically they may also make it easier to sue the referee.

This is all about the Ben Smoldon case last week. He was paralysed in 1981 after a scrum collapsed, when he was 17, and won a case in negligence against the referee.

It opened a flood of cases based on the principle. Once you owe a duty of care, you must not directly or indirectly cause damage that could reasonably be foreseen. So: wet hospital floors, unguarded manholes, missing light-bulbs have given damages to the injured and second homes to lawyers.

competent. No, I was a menace, usually because I got completely carried away and became partisan.

"Cheering on the home side I can live with," one general captain explained to me, "but tackling our out-half is a bit much."

So the referee *marqué* says: what a shame and a pity for the sport. The lawyer rubs his hands and thinks: that's good for business.

The modern Tort of Negligence began with a snail in a bottle of ginger beer in 1932, the sight of which allegedly caused a lady to feel ill. Donoghue v Stevenson became one of the pillars of our common law.

Lord Atkin said, you must take reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions which you can reasonably foresee would be likely to injure your neighbour, whom he defined as someone you ought reasonably to have in mind at the time.

They mostly concerned the liability of the occupiers of premises to the public. Apart from great public tragedies, such as the Bradford fire and Hillsborough, they used to get short shrift.

A child got an ice-hockey puck in the face at Haringey in 1981; serve the father right for taking him there. A Mr Bolton was hit on the head outside a cricket ground; next time take a detour.

BUT that has changed — as we have changed. It is the special virtue of the Common Law to embody the development of our nation. So as sport is reorganised and developed, so inevitably change the duties placed upon its participants.

We have seen the courts regularly intervene in professional sport. I can't remember many cries of outrage about that. And we should not be shocked now.

If organising bodies responsibly impose duties upon referees and coaches for the protection of the vulnerable then, just as it has since the reign of Henry II, the Common Law will find new ways to enforce them.

To say "if it looks dangerous, stop it," is merely to invite one of Her Majesty's Justices — sooner or later — to say, "Well, it looked dangerous to me, and you didn't."

I have a conflict of loyalties. I must confess, I was once a practising lawyer, specialising in personal-injury cases. I admit it.

But to move downwards, I hear you cry, from a profession held in such low esteem... to journalism? I am clearly a dangerous recidivist and you understand why I keep quiet about it.

There's more. I have on a few occasions refereed rugby matches, always because the proper ref hadn't turned up for the fourth-XV game. I was in-

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Saddam fails to invade the world of chess

Leonard Barden

SADDAM HUSSEIN will not host the world championship after all.

Worldwide protests have forced the International Chess Federation (Fide) to cancel plans for Anatoly Karpov to play Gata Kasparov in Baghdad in June with £1.3 million at stake.

Several countries threatened to walk out of the 150-nation world body. Leaders of European federations called an emergency summit meeting, and the US

State Department forbade Kamsky to play. The former Soviet prodigy, now applying for American citizenship, had to comply.

Prize-money now comes down to \$550,000 and the match goes to Elista, capital of the small Russian republic of Kalmykia, whose president, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, just happens to be Fide's new leader.

Last Tuesday the Times praised Goldsmith for "the purity of his message" — though the paper neglected to add that its owner, Rupert Murdoch, is an old pal who has enjoyed Goldsmith's hospitality at his Xanadu-style estate in Mexico.

From the **Weekend Q2** page 5

Guardian Crossword No 20,635

Set by Chifonie

Across

- 1 Is the ghost of the theatre purged by this? (8,6)
- 3 See man about to ban red roses, for instance (4,5)
- 10 Either way it's direct (6)
- 11 College said to be eroded (5)
- 12 Time-waster makes sweet item with hesitation (9)
- 13 Stands at the game to see the Queen in shadows (8)
- 14 Study the odds before broadcast (6)
- 17 Cause a sensation with old quote (6)
- 18 Censure salesman taking fish (8)
- 22 Cry of pain by leader of Diss Town accepting scoring move (9)
- 24 Love to get footballer unsettled (5)

- 25 Return an impulse and create endless confusion (5)
- 26 Confuse man and lie to obtain a gem (9)
- 27 This is the way to a Tory stronghold (4,2,3,5)

Down

- 1 Sat right in spotlight to show main characteristic (7,7)
- 2 Shipbuilder drops alien in the water (7)
- 3 Mean social worker is a manager (8)
- 4 Enquire about the condition of cooked RAF steak (3,5)
- 5 Small group surrounds pupil enlightened by star (8)
- 6 The opening of a chain letter (5)
- 7 Transposed a popular passage from the bible (7)
- 8 King glared at the ref. for bungling (6,3,5)

CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,634

- 15 Thief cast out of meat into unpolluted river (9)
- 16 Siren comes from Kent at whatever speed (3,5)
- 18 Shut up about our gallantry! (7)
- 20 Steadfast sailor gets one to ring (7)
- 21 A firm supporting my French principality (8)
- 23 Angry for the other fellow got the nam (3,2)

Solution tomorrow

23 Stuck? Then call our solutions line on 0204 338 226. Calls cost 30p per min, cheap rates, 49p per min at all other times. Service supplied by ATS

سكنا من الاصل